

*BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.*

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SANTAL PARGANAS.

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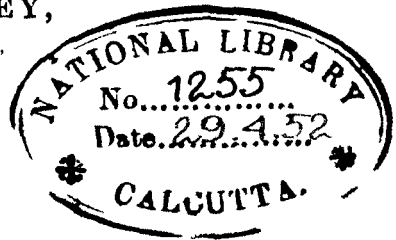
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# BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.

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## SANTAL PARGANAS

BY  
L. S. S. O'MALLEY,  
INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.



CALCUTTA:  
THE BENGAL SECRETARIAT BOOK DEPOT.

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1910.

## PREFACE.

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I CANNOT too fully acknowledge my obligations to Mr. H. McPherson, I.C.S., Director of Land Records, Bengal, who very kindly placed at my disposal a proof copy of his Report on Survey and Settlement Operations in the Santāl Parganas. I beg also to express my thanks to the Revd. P. O. Bodding for the valuable notes on the Santāls which he contributed, and to Mr. H. W. P. Scroope, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner, Santāl Parganas, and Mr. H. Ll. L. Allanson, I.C.S., Settlement Officer, Santāl Parganas, for the assistance they rendered in revising the proofs and supplying material.

L. S. S. O'M.

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# G A Z E T T E E R

## O F T H E

# S A N T A L P A R G A N A S.

### CHAPTER I.

#### PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

THE district known as the Santāl Parganas, which forms the south-eastern portion of the Bhāgalpur Division, lies between  $23^{\circ} 40'$  and  $25^{\circ} 18'$  north latitude, and between  $86^{\circ} 28'$  and  $87^{\circ} 57'$  east longitude. It contains a population of 1,809,737 persons, as ascertained by the census of 1901, and it extends over 5,470 square miles. *It is thus almost as large as the three English counties of Cornwall, Devon and Somerset, and it has nearly three-quarters of a million more inhabitants.* Its greatest length is 120 miles from the Ganges on the north-east to the river Barākar on the south-west; its average length from north to south is about 100 miles, and its breadth from west to east is nearly the same. Dumkā, or Nayā Dumkā, is the administrative headquarters of the district.

GENERAL  
DESCRIP-  
TION.

The Santāl Parganas are bounded on the north by the districts of Bhāgalpur and Purnea; on the east by Mālda, Murshidabād and Birbhūm; on the south by Burdwān and Mānbhūm; and on the west by Hazāribāgh, Monghyr and Bhāgalpur. The boundary on the north and the east of the district is defined for some distance by the river Ganges, which separates the Santāl Parganas from Purnea and Mālda, while portions of the southern boundary coincide with the Barākar and Ajai rivers, which separate it from Mānbhūm and Burdwān.

Bounda-  
ries.

The district is an upland tract with a hilly backbone running from north to south. To the north and east it is flanked by a long but narrow strip of alluvial soil hemmed in between the river Ganges and the Rājmahāl Hills. These hills rise abruptly from the plains, forming a wall 1,000 to 2,000 feet high, which

Configura-  
tion.

juts out into the Gangetic valley and forces the Ganges to bend to the east before it finally takes its southerly course to the sea. From Sahibganj they stretch southwards in an extensive range, which is divided into two portions by the Burhait or Manjhwā valley. This range and its outliers form a central block of hilly country, some 2,000 square miles in area, of which 1,356 square miles are included in the Government estate of the Damin-i-koh. To the north-west of the range lies a level fertile tract known as Tappa Manihāri, and to the west and south the hills give place to a series of rolling ridges and undulating uplands, from which rise isolated hills and ridges of sharp and often fantastic outline.

**Natural  
divisions.**

Broadly speaking, the district may be divided into three parts, viz., the hilly portion, which covers about three-eighths of the entire area, the rolling country covering half of it, and the flat country, which occupies the remainder. The hilly part of the district stretches continuously for about 100 miles from the Ganges at Sahibganj to the southern boundary of the district a little north of Suri. It is made up of a medley of hill ranges and valleys, and includes the whole of the Damin-i-koh and the southern and eastern portions of the Dumkā subdivision. The hills are in many parts still covered with jungle, while in the valleys, some of which are of considerable size, are scattered small villages surrounded by cultivated clearings. The rolling country includes the whole of the west and south-west of the district. It contains long ridges with intervening depressions, in places rocky and in places covered with scrub jungle. The third division consists of a fringe of low land between the Ganges and the hills, which is largely cultivated with rice and liable to annual inundation. Beginning at the north-west corner of the district (Tappa Manihāri) it forms a narrow and practically continuous strip of alluvial soil, about 120 miles long, lying for the most part along the Loop Line of the East Indian Railway in the Rājmaḥal and Pakaur subdivisions. Its total area is about 500 square miles.

**Scenery.**

In the alluvial tract to the south-east the scenery resembles that of the Gangetic valley, but is relieved from tameness by the background of hills. The scenery is far more picturesque in the hilly and undulating tracts which make up the rest of the district, and has been well described by Mr. H. McPherson, I.C.S. "The upland country, which is now a land of smiling cultivation, is not devoid of hills, but these are either isolated peaks like Phuljori or small ranges like Teor. Their isolation makes them prominent, and they stand up boldly, breaking the monotony of the landscape and making a striking addition to the prospect. Phuljori is 2,300

feet high, and Teor just under 2,000 feet. They are both in the subdivision of Deoghar, from every open point of which glimpses can be caught of distant Parasnāth, the sacred mountain of the Jains, rising 4,500 feet into the western sky, some 30 miles across the Hazāribāgh border. Although the western uplands contain many picturesque spots, they are for the most part tame and uninteresting, and most of the natural beauty of the district is confined to the hills on the east.

"Here the toil of climbing up the steep hillsides is always rewarded with magnificent views. In the way of mountain pass and woodland scenery I know of nothing finer than the hill roads between Katikund and Amrāpārā in the southern hills, where the forests are protected by the State. In the deeper ranges of the northern hills I have wandered over a tumbled confusion of lofty hills and deep valleys affording views which approach in beauty those of the lower Himālayas; and nothing can be nobler than the prospect from the crest of the north-eastern circle of hills between Sāhibganj and Rājmaḥāl, where one looks down the steep hillsides upon the silver stream of the Ganges and the fertile plains beyond, extending as far as the eye can reach."\*

The principal range in the district is that of the Rājmaḥāl HILL SYSTEM. Hills, which stretch from Sāhibganj on the Ganges to Nangal-bangā on the Rāmpur Hāt road close to the south-eastern boundary of the district. They consist of a succession of hills, plateaux, valleys and ravines, the general elevation of which varies from 500 to 800 feet above sea-level, though some hills have an altitude of 1,500 feet and a few are said to rise to the height of 2,000 feet. Among these loftier peaks may be mentioned Mahuāgarhī (1,665 feet), which it was at one time proposed to make a sanitarium, though the valleys by which it is reached are notoriously unhealthy. The highest points in the range are believed to be Mori, a fine peak about 2,000 feet in altitude, and Sendgarsā, both of which overlook the Burhait valley. This, the central valley of the hills, extends over 24 miles from north to south with an average width of 5 miles. It is surrounded by hills, but there are five narrow passes leading to the plains—the Chaparbhitā to the south-west, the Manjhwā to the north-west in the direction of Bhāgalpur, the Ghātiāri to the east, the Margo to the south-east, and a fifth north-east to Rājmaḥāl. The valley is drained by the river Morel or Moran, which, flowing from the north, has scoured out a long ravine, and by the Gumāni coming from the south-west through the Chaparbhitā pass. These rivers

\* Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Santāl Parganas, 1909.

meet at Burhait, and the united stream, which is called the Gumāni, flows along the Ghātiārī pass, and thence through the plains to the Ganges. Further south the Bānsloi, a fine broad stream, intersects the hills, flowing along the Pachwārā or Kendwā pass, which runs through the range from east to west. There are also numerous small streams flowing down nearly every ravine and valley, which afford an abundance of pure fresh water. To the north-east the hills abut upon the Ganges, leaving only a narrow passage along which the Loop Line of the East Indian Railway passes. This belt contracts towards the north, leaving a still narrower passage, which was in Mughal times a pass of great strategic importance. It was known as the "Key of Bengal," and was defended by the fortresses of Teliāgarhi and Sakrigāli, of which the ruins may still be seen.

The interior of the range is not well known, but within its limits there are scenes of varied beauty, which contrast with its somewhat bluff exterior as seen from the railway on the east. Here there may be seen hills crowded one upon another, steep narrow ravines, wide valleys, sharp ridges and small plateaux. Among these the Santāls and Pahāriās have their villages, which are often picturesquely situated on the brow of a steep hill, with cultivated fields and grass lands stretching beyond them. In the south and south-west there are broad tablelands on the crests of the ridges, which contain stretches of arable land. Throughout the rest of the range rugged peaks and ridges prevail, but the slope of the interior valleys is gentle and affords scope for the plough—and wherever a plough can work, the Santāl settlements are found, whether on the summit or the slope. The villages of the Pahāriās are situated on the hill tops, the approach to which often consists of boulders piled one upon another. Millets, *sarguja* (*Guizotia oleifera*), pulses, and even rice may be seen covering the hills, while mangoes, jack fruit trees and palm trees thrive luxuriantly. The slopes yield large quantities of bamboos and firewood, and the spiked millet is grown in patches everywhere. A large trade has recently spring up in *salai* grass (*Ischaemum angustifolium*), which is brought down from the hills to Sāhibganj, where it is baled and despatched by rail to the paper mills in the neighbourhood of Calcutta. This *sabai* cultivation has resulted in the denudation of the outer hills, and has given them that bluff appearance which the traveller observes from the railway.

A large portion of the range is included in the Dāmin-i-koh, a Persian name meaning 'the skirts of the hills.' This is a Government estate with an area of 1,356 square miles, the extreme length of which from north to south is 70 miles; its width near

the centre of the hills is 30 miles, but to the north and south it contracts to 16 miles.

The Rājmahāl Hills have been described as "classic ground for the study of Indian geology."\* They consist of a succession of basaltic lava flows or traps with interstratifications of shale and sandstone. The sedimentary bands are held to have been deposited in the intervals of time which elapsed between the volcanic outbursts, by the circumstance that the different bands of shale and sandstone differ from each other in mineral character, and also that the upper surface of the shaly beds has sometimes been hardened and altered by the contact of the overlying basalt, whilst the lower surface is never affected. The sedimentary bands are chiefly composed of hard white and grey shale, carbonaceous shale, white and grey sandstone, and hard quartzose grit. The trap rocks are all dark coloured dolerites. They vary in character from a fine grained, very tough and hard rock (anamesite), ringing under the hammer, and with the edges of its fracture almost as sharp as those of a quartzite, to a comparatively soft, coarsely crystalline basalt. The latter usually contains olivine in large quantities.

Very little light is thrown on the source of the basaltic rocks by any observations within the Rājmahāl area. Dykes are rare, and there is only one instance known of an intrusive mass which may mark the site of an old volcanic outburst. This is close to the village of Simra, where a group of small conical hills occurs, composed of pinkish trachyte, porphyritic in places and surrounded by Damodar rocks. The surface of the ground is much obscured by superficial deposits, but there appears good reason for supposing that the core of a volcanic vent is here exposed. It appears not an unfrequent occurrence that the later outbursts from a volcano are more silicious than earlier eruptions, and that a volcanic core, even when the lava flows have been doleritic, should itself prove trachytic, when exposed by denudation. This may be due to the solution of the highly silicious metamorphic rocks through which the outburst took place by the molten lava remaining in the fissure after the eruption, and the consequent conversion of that lava from a basic into an acid rock.

The bedded basaltic traps of these hills, with their associated sedimentary beds, attain a thickness of at least 2,000 feet, of which the non-volcanic portion never exceeds 100 feet in the aggregate. There is also an important bed of laterite in these hills, Mahuāgarhi, the highest plateau in the range (1,655 feet above the sea), being capped by this formation. The laterite is, in places, as much

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\* \* V. Ball, *Geology of the Rājmahāl Hills*, Memoirs, Geo. Surv. Ind., Vol. XIII.

as 200 feet thick, and it slopes gradually from the western scarp of the hills, where it attains its highest elevation, to the Gangetic plain on the east.

The Rājmahāl Hills have given their name to a series of the Gondwārā system, and there is also a group of sandstones and conglomerates called the Dubrājpur group after the village of that name.\*

The following remarks of Sir T. H. Holdich are of interest as showing the great age of the Rājmahāl Hills:—"We are faced with the almost indisputable fact that the India of the Aravallist and of the Rājmahāl Hills was but an extension from South Africa. The evidence which has been collected to prove this ancient connection seems to be conclusive. Plants of Indian and African coal measures are identical, and not only plants, but the fauna of that period claim a similar affinity. Near the coast of South Africa a series of beds occur which is similar in all respects to an existing Rājmahāl series. . . . This land connection must have existed at the commencement of cretaceous times." Again he says, speaking of the prehistoric continent—"There was no Gangetic basin in those days, and it was probable that the Rājmahāl Hills and the hills of Assam continued the land area to the Himalayas east of Sikkim." He then speaks of later earth movements, and continues—"Another result of this succession of earth movements was the formation of that great Indo-Gangetic depression which forms one of the natural geographical divisions of India. The break in the connection between the Rājmahāl and Assam hills, which gave an opening for the eastward flow of the Ganges, is comparatively recent."†

Rāmgarh  
Hills.

In the south-east of the Dumkā subdivision, south of the Brāhmanī river, there is a small range of hills known as the Rāmgarh Hills. These hills are an extension of the Rājmahāl range, but they are not so high and they have a more rounded and undulating outline. The highest peak is Karakata, which is a land-mark for all the country round, as it rises in dome-shaped prominence from the block of hills constituting the group.

Geologically, the Rāmgarh Hills are interesting, both the Dubrājpur and Barākar subdivisions of the Gondwārā system

\* This account of the geology of the Rājmahāl Hills is condensed from the notices of it contained in *The Manual of the Geology of India* by R. D. Oldham (pp. 174-6, 376).

† "Oldest of all the physical features which intersect the continent is the range of mountains known as the Aravallis, which strikes across the Peninsula from north-east to south-west, overlooking the sandy wastes of Rājprthana." [Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1907, vol. I, p. 1.]

‡ *India* (Regions of the World Series), pp. 8, 9, 10.

being represented in them. The Dubrājpur subdivision is found in a narrow strip with faulted western boundary along the western border of the range. It consists of coarse grits and conglomerates, often ferruginous, containing quartz and gneiss pebbles, with occasionally hard and dark ferruginous bands. It is unconformably overlaid by the Rajmahal group, consisting chiefly of bedded basic volcanic lavas of the nature of dolerites and basalts. Basic dykes scattered through the gneiss area represent the underground portion of these eruptions. Intercalate between successive lava flows are aqueous, sedimentary layers containing fossil plants similar to those found near Jubbulpore and in Cutch.

Further west two parallel ranges of hills stretch in an easterly direction from Mosanjoī to Rānibahal. They present a landscape of considerable beauty as seen from the Mosanjoī bungalow, which looks out on a picturesque grouping of hills and dales said to rival the hills of the Dāmin-i-koh in its effects. These ranges, after crossing the Mor at Rānibahal, form the Satgarh group in *tāluk* Muhammadābād, north of Jagdispur, and finally merge into the Sapchalā hills, one of a group of ranges passing through *tāluk* Sapchalā, Lakhanpur, Sankara and Kumrābād, which attain a considerable height in the two *tāluk*s first named. The Sapchalā range breaks up into isolated hillocks after crossing the Nunbil river; and north of it, near Dumkā, there are a number of other detached hills, which rise abruptly from the plains in sharp conical masses. The most important of these are the Lagwa hills near Nunihāt and the Mikra hills on the borders of the Deoghar subdivision. Other hill ranges.

In the latter subdivision there are no continuous ranges, such hills as exist being isolated peaks in the middle of the plains. The most striking are (1) Phuljori (2,312 feet), 18 miles east of Madhupur railway station, (2) Degariā (1,715 feet), 3 miles west of Baidyanāth junction, (3) Patharda (1,505 feet), 8 miles west of Madhupur railway station, (4) Trikūt Parvat, commonly known as Tiur (or Teor) Pahār, 10 miles east of Baidyanāth-Deoghar, which is 1,505 feet above the plains and about 2,500 feet above sea-level. Less important, though picturesque in appearance, are the peaks known as Jalwe, midway between Madhupur and Baidyanāth, Belmi near Phuljori, Paboi 6 miles south-east of Tiur, and Makro, 8 miles east of Paboi. With the exception of Phuljori, Tiur, Patharda, Degariā and Jalwe, which contain *sāl* and bamboo jungle, these hills are mere rocky excrescences. In the Jāmtārā subdivision also there are a few detached hills of no great size, the highest being Ghātiā (1,181 feet) and Malanchā (863 feet), on which stand Government trigonometrical survey pillars.



RIVER  
SYSTEM.

The general slope of the country is from north-west to south-east, except in the small alluvial tract lying between the Rājmahāl Hills and the Bhāgalpur boundary, where the land slopes towards the north-west and sends its drainage to the Ganges. The valley of the Barākar separates the south-west of the district from the Chotā-Nāgpur plateau, but here also the inclination is to the south-east, and the Ajai and Mor, with their numerous tributaries, carry the drainage of the western half of the district not into the Barākar, but into the Bhāgirathi below Murshidābad. The streams which rise within the Rājmahāl Hills follow the same general direction as those of the south-western uplands, *i.e.*, from north-west to south-east, and, issuing through passes in the hills, join the Ganges after it has made its great curve southwards below Sahibganj. With the exception of the Ganges, the rivers of the district are hill streams, with well-defined channels and high banks. In the rains they come down in flood and become rapid torrents, impassable owing to the velocity of the current, which gathers force as it sweeps down over rocky beds. In the hot season they are reduced to a mere thread of water not more than 2 feet deep, with a gentle stream trickling through the sand. The following is a brief account of the principal rivers.

## Ganges

The Ganges first touches on this district a few miles west of Teliāgarhi, and flows eastwards as far as Sakrigāli, where it bends to the south-east leaving the district a short distance below Udhua Nullah. The average width of its bed is about 3 miles, but the stream does not fill its channel in the hot weather, and almost invariably overflows it in the rains. There have been considerable changes in this portion of its course within historic times. To the north it formerly ran under the walls of the fort at Teliāgarhi, but the main stream is now far away and the East Indian Railway line runs along the alluvial deposit it has formed. To the east the main stream formerly flowed close to Rājmahāl, and about 1640 washed away many of the buildings in the city; but it is clear from Tavernier's account that by 1666 it had taken another course and was fully half a league away from Rājmahāl. In 1860, when the Loop Line of the East Indian Railway was extended to this town, an arm of the Ganges ran immediately under the station, forming a navigable channel for steamers and boats of all sizes. In 1863-64 the river abandoned this channel, leaving an alluvial bank in its place, and Rājmahāl was till 1879 3 miles distant from the main stream of the Ganges, and could only be approached by large boats during the rains. In that year the Ganges returned to its old bed, but in 1882 it showed

indications of again deserting it. Steamers are still able to approach the bank, but in consequence of these changes the bulk of trade has been transferred to Sahibganj. Rajmahal still retains the local traffic across the Ganges with the Mālda district, but it is reported that the river is again giving indications of deserting the town.

The most important river in the north of the district is the Gumāni. Gumāni, which rises in the Rajmahal Hills in the extreme east of the Goddā subdivision and makes its way north-east through the gorges which it has scoured out for itself. At Burhait it is joined by the Morel river coming down from the north, and from this point the Gumāni flows a short distance to the east and then turns sharply to the south. Finally, after a winding course of some 30 or 40 miles, it emerges from the hills and flowing eastwards makes its way across the plains, falling into the Ganges a short distance beyond the boundary of this district.

The Bānsloi rises at a hill called Bāns Pahār in the Goddā Bānsloi subdivision, and flowing in a general easterly direction, forms the northern boundary of the Dumkā subdivision, separating it from the Goddā and Pākaur subdivisions. It emerges into the Dumkā Dāmin through the Pachwārā pass, and then meanders along its northern boundary past the Silingi and Kuskira bungalows. It leaves the district near Maheshpur, and flowing past Murarai station on the East Indian Railway debouches in the Bhāgirathi.

The Brāhmani rises in the west of the Dudhūā hills in the Brāhman north of the Dumkā subdivision, and flowing through Pharasemul and Sankara form the southern boundary of the Dumkā Dāmin. It passes by the Jhilimili and Mosnia bungalows in the Dāmin-ikoh, and leaving the Dumkā subdivision at Darin-Mauleswar enters the Birbhūm district and joins the Bhāgirathi after crossing the East Indian Railway at Nallhati station. Its main tributaries are the Gumro and Ero, which drain the watershed between the Rāmgarh and the Dāmin hills.

The Mor, which drains the central portion of the Santāl Mor. Parganas, rises in the Tiur hills at the extreme north-east corner of the Deoghar subdivision. Entering the Dumkā subdivision at its north-western corner, it follows a winding south-easterly course through it, passing close to Dumkā and Kumrābād, where a line of rocky boulders rises high from its bed. Leaving the subdivision at Amjorā, it passes into the Birbhūm district, and joins the Bhāgirathi after crossing the East Indian Railway at Sainthiā station. It is known as the Motihari in its upper course, and it is only after its junction with the Bhurbhuri in taluk Nawādā that it takes the name of Mor. Another name for the stream is

Morākhi or Mayūrākshi, the peacock-eyed, *i.e.*, having water as lustrous as the eye of a peacock.

The following are the main tributaries of the Mor. The Bhurbhuri rises on the east of the Dudhua hills and joins it at Nawādā. The Dhobai, which rises in the Godda subdivision, flows eastwards and southwards after crossing the Bhāgalpur-Suri road, and skirting the base of the Lagwa hill, joins the Mor three miles above its confluence with the Bhurbhuri. The Tipra, coming from the west, joins the Mor at Phuljori two miles further south, the Pusaro joins it in *tāluk* Dhuria, and the Bhamri in Beludabar. The Nunbil rises in the east of the Deoghar subdivision, and entering the subdivision in *tāluk* Singro follows a south-easterly course. Then passing through Goremala, it joins the river Sidh at Babupur. The Sidh rises in the south-east corner of the Deogarh subdivision, and flows south-east and then east through the Jāmtārā and Dumkā subdivisions, joining the Mor a few miles north of the borders of Birbhūm. The Dauna rises in *tāluk* Sankara north of the Rampur Hāt road, crosses it at the 8th mile, then meanders on the east of the Suri road, and falls into the Mor, after crossing the latter road at the 10th mile.

Ajai.

The Ajai rises in the Monghyr district, and after draining the north-western corner of the Deoghar subdivision, flows in a south-easterly direction through its centre, being joined from the west by the Pathro below Sarath, and further south by the Jainti. Both these tributaries rise in the Hazaribagh district. The Ajai enters the Jāmtārā subdivision at Kajrā and flowing southwards forms the southern boundary of the district from Kusbedia, a few miles east of the railway station at Mihijām, to Afzalpur at the extreme southern point of the Santal Parganas.

WATER-  
FALLS.

The most picturesque waterfall in the district is that called Motijharanā, *i.e.*, the pearl cascade. This is situated about two miles south-west of the Mahārājpur railway station at the head of a picturesque glen of the Rājmahāl Hills. There are two falls, each 50 or 60 feet in height, by which the water of a small hill stream tumbles down over two ledges of rock. There are also two small falls or cascades on the Brāhmanī and Bānsloi rivers. The first is at Singhpur, where the Brāhmanī river dashes over an extensive bed of basalt, which here crosses the stream at right angles and forms a fall of about 10 feet. The other is 18 miles to the north close to the village of Kuskirā, where the bed of the Bānsloi river is crossed by a broad belt of basalt causing a fall of about 12 feet in height. The action of the water has worn the rock into a number of deep cup-like depressions, some of which are of considerable size. In the centre of the stream, below the

falls, stands an isolated group of colossal basaltic columns, one of which was measured by Captain Sherwill in 1851 and found to be 48 feet in circumference.

There are several hot springs in the Pākaur and Dumkā sub-<sup>HOT SPRINGS.</sup> divisions. In the former the hottest spring is one called simply Laulaudah (the Santal name for hot water), which is situated near the bank of a small stream called the Boru, about half a mile north-west of Sibpur village in the Maheshpur outpost. Another hot spring near Birki in the same outpost is called Bāramāsia and by the Santāls Bhumuk. In the Dumkā subdivision six hot springs have been discovered, viz.—(1) Jhāriya Pāni near Gopikandar, (2) Tatloi on the bank of the Bhurbhuri river near Palāsi, (3) Nunbil near Kondghāta,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-west of Kumrābād, (4) Tapat Pāni on the left bank of the Mor,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles north of Kumrābād, (5) Susum Pāni on the opposite bank of the Mor, close to the village of Bāghmārū,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the south-east of Tapat Pāni, and (6) Bhumka on the right bank of the same river  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from Rānibahal. Further particulars of the springs will be found in an article by Colonel Waddell published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1890. Since that date another spring called Patalganga made its appearance at Nunihāt some six years ago.

“Most of the hot springs,” writes Colonel Waddell, “are held in considerable repute by the natives in the neighbourhood as potent remedies, especially for itch, ulcers and other skin affections. But a most essential part of the process of cure consists in the preliminary worship which must be paid to the presiding deity of the spring. Nearly all of these springs are worshipped by the Hindu and semi-aboriginal villagers in the vicinity; for these strange outbursts of heated water are regarded by them as supernatural phenomena and the especial expression of the presence of a deity. The deity usually worshipped at the springs by the semi-aborigines is Mātā or Māi, the “mother” goddess—one of the forms of Kālī—and large *melās* are held in her honour. She is especially worshipped by those suffering from itch and other skin diseases, also by the barren, both male and female, who all bathe in the water and drink some of it. Goats, etc., are sacrificed to her, and the rocks are daubed with vermilion or red-lead, and pieces of coloured rags are tied to the nearest bush or tree in her worship. At Nunbil the goddess is called Nunbil Devī, and she is believed to especially reside in a large *sāl* tree over the spring. At Jhāriya the Bhuiyā *ghāt-wāls* (of Dravidian type, with short frizzly hair) worship, with fowl sacrifice and offerings of rice, the spirit of Sonmon Pānde, a Brāhman priest, who is

said to have died there. The more Hinduized worshippers, however, believe that their favourite god Mahādeva is specially present at all those hot springs, and to him they there offer worship.

"Curiously enough, the thermal springs of relatively low temperature, which might perhaps be termed 'warm' rather than hot springs, are believed by the villagers to be hotter in the very early morning, and to become cooler as the day advances. This opinion is evidently founded on the loose subjective sensation of the villagers, who in the cool of the morning remark that the spring, being hotter than the atmosphere, gives a sensation of decided heat: which contrast becomes less marked during the day when the sun has heated up the earth and air, causing these to approach the temperature of the spring."\* The same phenomenon was noticed by Professor Ball, who wrote:—"Cases of hot springs have been reported to occur in these (Rājmahāl) hills, but I did not meet with any that were more than tepid. The natives say that in most of them the water is warm in the winter and cool in the summer. This is, of course, due to the contrast afforded by the temperature of the surrounding atmosphere at the different seasons. The principal springs which I have visited were near the villages of Ruksi, Rājbhita and Puraya, west of Burio. There is also one on the Chaparbhitā range and another in the valley north-east of Burhāt not far from the Mahādeo cave."†

#### GEOLOGY.

Archæan gneiss and Gondwāna rocks constitute the greater portion of the Santāl Parganas, the latter represented principally by the volcanic rocks of the Rājmahāl Hills, which occupy an elevated strip of land along the eastern border, while to the west the undulating area that constitutes the greater part of the district consists of Bengal gneiss, which is remarkable for the great variety of crystalline rocks which it contains. The Gondwāna division consists of the Tāleher, Dāmodar, Dubrajpur and Rāj-mahāl groups. The Tāleher and Dāmodar belong to the lower Gondwānas, and the other two groups to the upper. The volcanic rocks of the Rājmahāl group are the predominant member of the series, and they constitute the greatest portion of the hills of that name. They are basic lavas resembling those of the Deccan trap and vary in their coarser types from a dolerite to a compact basalt in the finer-grained varieties. A trachytic intrusion situated in

\* Some new and little known hot springs in South Bihar, J. A. S. B., Part II. 1890, pages 224-35.

† Geology of the Rājmahāl Hills, Memoirs, Geological Survey of India; Volume XIII.

the Hurā coal-field, about 22 miles south-east of Colgong, although petrologically quite different from the basic basalts and dolerites, may nevertheless belong to the same volcanic series. Sedimentary beds, consisting principally of hard white shales and sometimes also of hard quartzose grits or carbonaceous black shales, occur frequently intercalated between successive flows, and these are of great interest on account of the beautifully preserved fossil plants which they contain. They are mostly cycadaceous plants together with some ferns and conifers and are identical with those found in the upper Gondwāna at Jubbulpore, in Cutch and various other places, and have been of great assistance to geologists in determining the age of the series.

In the Rājmaḥāl Hills, the Gondwāna groups underlying the volcanic group are found principally along the western border of the range. The outcrops are very discontinuous, owing partly to the faulted nature of the western boundary, and partly to the overlaps between the different members, which in the case of the Barākars, Dubrājpur and Rājmaḥāl amount to a well-marked unconformity. The Tālchers are very poorly represented. They consist of the usual greenish silts and sandstones with only a local development of the well-known boulder bed. These rocks are supposed to be of glacial origin. The next group is the most important from an economic point of view, as it contains the coal measures. Along the western border of the hills it constitutes several coal-fields, which, enumerated from north to south, are (1) the Hurā coal-field, a tract about 15 miles long from north to south, commencing about 13 miles south-east of Colgong; (2) the Chaparbhitā coal-field about 10 miles further south in the valley of the Gumāni; (3) the Pachwārā field in the Bānsloi valley, and (4) the Brāhmaṇī coal-field in the valley of the river from which it derives its name.

In the three southern fields the Dāmodar rocks are lithologically similar to the Barākar beds of the Rāniganj coal-field, consisting of alternations of grit, sandstone and shale, with occasional beds of inferior coal. The coal-measures of the Hurā field are lithologically different: they consist of friable felspathic grits and soft white shales, with a few thick seams of inferior coal, and correspond possibly with the Rāniganj group of the Dāmodar coal-fields. The Dubrājpur group, which either intervenes between the Dāmodar and the volcanic rocks, or rests directly on the gneiss, to be overlapped in its turn by the volcanic rocks themselves, consists of coarse grits and conglomerates, often ferruginous, containing quartz and gneiss pebbles with occasionally hard and dark ferruginous bands.

The south-western portion of the district contains the small Deogarh coal-fields and the northern edge of the Rāniganj coal-field. The Tālcher and Barākar are the groups represented. The boundaries of these coal-fields are often faulted. There are numerous dykes and intrusive masses of mica peridotite and augite dolerite, the underground representatives of the Rājmahāl gneiss. The coal in the Deogarh fields is neither plentiful nor of good quality. In the north of the district the rocks disappear beneath the Gangetic alluvium.

**Mineral  
resources.**

The chief mineral products of economic value are coal, which has already been referred to, building stones, road metal, ornamental stones, lime, pottery clays, iron, copper and lead ores. The Rājmahāl Hills contain a considerable variety of rocks suitable for building purposes. The basaltic trap, if carefully chosen, affords a durable building material, which formerly was not only used in temples, forts and other structures in the immediate vicinity of the hills, but was also carried to towns situated at a distance in the plains. Besides trap, there are a number of sandstones suited for building purposes; and in some places a Tālcher sandstone is quarried on a small scale for manufacture into curbstones, plates, etc. Laterite is found on the tops of some hills and for a considerable distance along their eastern flanks. In many places it is sufficiently compact and dense to be employed as a building material, and evidence of its having been so used is afforded by certain old forts and temples. The basaltic trap is also capable of affording an inexhaustible supply of road metal, but there are only a few localities where it is sufficiently near to rail or water carriage to render it available for export. At present, stone is quarried only on the hills bordering the Loop Line of the East Indian Railway from Murarai to Sahibganj, the most important quarried being those established by Mr. Atkinson at Udhua Nullah and by Mr. Ambler at Mahārājpur. The basaltic trap also yields agates and chalcedony, while common opal and various forms of rock crystal are abundant. \*

The nodular limestone called *kankar* or *ghuting* exists in many places both in the hills and in the country adjoining them, considerable deposits being found at Sakrigāli, where quantities of lime have been manufactured for export to Calcutta and elsewhere. Limestone tufa encrusts the rocks at several places in the hills, where its origin is probably due to warm springs. "The rock,"

\* Memoirs of the Geological Survey of India, Volumes VII and XIII, and Records of the Geological Survey of India, Volume XXVII. The above account was contributed by Mr. E. Vredenburg, Deputy Superintendent, Geological Survey of India.

writes Professor Ball, "presents a reticulated appearance, which is chiefly due to the twigs and other foreign substances which were enveloped in the calcareous matter. This structure gave rise, no doubt, to the superstition amongst the natives that it was an accumulation of giants' bones (*asahar*), and the native account again led to the hope on the part of some of the scientific men of Calcutta that the *asahar* of the Rājmahāl Hills would prove to be an accumulation of bones similar to the mammalian fossils of the Sewālik hills." This hope proved unfounded. The principal localities at which this formation has been found are on the north flank of the Mahuāgarhi hill near the village of Amdiha and on the south near Belaidiha in the valley south-east of Chandna and south of Rājbhita, and between the villages of Gongti and Simaltalā, east of Bindrāban.

China-clay has long been known to exist at Lohandiā in the Rājmahāl Hills, and recent investigation has brought to light its existence in other localities. It occurs in three ways—(1) as the decomposition product of felspar in the fundamental gneisses and schists; (2) in the white Dāmodar sandstone, where its presence is due to the decomposition of felspar originally present in the sandstone; and (3) as beds of white china clay interbedded in the white Dāmodar sandstone. The first form is seen in some quantity at Katangi near Baskiā, at Karaupur and at Dodhāui. The second form is seen at Mangalhāt, where it is extracted by the Calcutta Pottery Company for the manufacture of china and porcelain; and it is also present throughout the Hurā coal field, in the northern and eastern boundaries of the Dhamni coal-field, and in parts of the Chaparbhita coal-field, chiefly near Alubaru and Amjhari. The third form occurs in the Hurā coal-field as a bed from 4 to 5 feet thick, about a quarter of a mile west of Piāram, at a place just south of the stream by Hurā on the jungle road leading to Mahuā Bathān, and also to the south of Rohri village. Fire-clay occurs somewhat plentifully on the western side of the Rājmahāl Hills, and is found mostly in the northern coal-fields, where it occurs in beds in the Dāmodar rocks.\*

Iron ores are found in considerable quantities in the basaltic trap and trappean beds, as well as in the old sandstones, and are worked by iron smelters, locally called Kols. Laterite is also sometimes sufficiently rich to be worked as an ore. Copper ores exist at Beherāki in the Deoghar subdivision, and lead ores (principally argentiferous galena) in the Sankara hills and at Tiur,

\* Murray Stuart, China-clay and Fire-clay Deposits in the Rājmahāl Hills, *Rec., Géol. Surv. Ind.*, Vol. XXXVIII, Part 2 (1909), pages 133-148.



Beherāki and Pānchpahār. At Beherāki 29 oz. 8 dwts. of silver have been obtained, and at Lakshmipur near Naya Dumkā 50 oz. 3 grs. of silver per ton of lead.

## BOTANY.

There are Government forests in the Dāmin-i-koh, but nearly all cultivable land having been brought under the plough, they are, for the most part, confined to the hills and the steeper ravines and slopes. In the Rājmahāl, Pākaur and Goddā subdivisions, the jungle has not been spared even on such hilly sites, for the Maler or Sauria Pahārias *jhūm* the steepest slopes, however stony, and raise a precarious crop, having been too lazy to cultivate the valleys, from which they have practically been ousted by the more energetic Santāl cultivator. The mischief done by the practice of *jhūming*, i.e., shifting cultivation, is further intensified by cattle grazing, which prevents the coppice or pollards from growing up again. In the Dumkā subdivision *jhūming* is not allowed, and in the lower slopes of the hills pure *sāl* forest is found in places, but trees over 3 feet in girth are rare. Higher up, the forests are mixed forests with little *sāl* but many bamboos.

Generally speaking, the predominant tree in the district is the *sāl* (*Shorea robusta*) called *sarjom* in Santālī. Its distribution is general, except where the forest has been destroyed, as is largely the case in the north of the Dāmin-i-koh estate, by *jhūming* and the cultivation of *sabai* grass. In the plains and valleys the chief trees accompanying *sāl* are *piar* (*Buchanania latifolia*), *hesel* (*Semecarpus anacardium*), and *āsan* (*Terminalia tomentosa*). On the lower slopes of the hills other species appear in considerable variety, such as *Zizyphus*, *Diospyros*, *Stereospermum* and *Bauhinia*. As the hills are ascended, other species are met with, e.g., bamboos (*Dendrocalamus strictus*), *murga* (*Pterocarpus Marsupium*), *satsal* (*Dalbergia latifolia*) and *gamhār* or *kāsamar* (*Gmelina arborea*); and the proportion of *sāl* gradually grows less, till on the upper plateaux it almost disappears. On the old *jhūmed* lands it gives place to a dense growth of shrubby trees, chief among which are *Nyctanthus arbor-tristis*, *Wendlandia*, *Gardenia*, *Flacourtia*, *Woodfordia* and *Anogeissus*. In the moist valleys on the northern face of the Rājmahāl Hills plantains with their large leaves present a more typically tropical vegetation than is found elsewhere.

The following account of the common trees found in and near the villages is quoted from *Santalia* by the Revd. J. M. Macphail:—"The tree which is most characteristic of the Santāl country is the *sāl*, sacred to the Santāls. Of it their sacred groves consist. It is a tall erect tree with large smooth leaves; of which leaf plates are made, and of a good hard wood which makes it

extremely popular for building purposes. The banyan is also common, whose spreading branches will shelter a small army, and its cousin the *pipal*, sacred to the Hindu. The stately *semal* or Indian cotton tree, with trunk buttressed like a fort and huge red flowers often a foot in diameter; the graceful tamarind, with feathery foliage; the *nim*, whose medicinal uses are manifold, and its brother the Persian lilac; the *palās*, a blaze of colour when in blossom in the hot season; the palm, fit emblem of the righteous man; the mango with its delicious fruit, and the plebeian but even more popular jack, and the almost universally useful bamboo, are the most common and remarkable among the others. Even more economically useful than any of them is the *mahuā*. The flower of this tree is edible, and, being rich in sugar, fairly nutritious. When in full blossom in March or April, it falls from the tree in the early morning. One thinks of the manna when one sees the ground beneath the *mahuā* trees almost covered with the whitish flower, and the resemblance is enhanced when the people turn out to carefully gather it into baskets. It is dried in the sun, and may be stored for months. To many of the poorer class it is for the time their article of diet, and there are few who do not use it to eke out their food-supply. Even those who do not eat it themselves use it for feeding cattle. The fruit is also highly prized. The pulp of it is eaten and from the kernel a fine bland oil is expressed."

The Santāl Parganas were formerly well stocked with big <sup>FAUNA.</sup> game.\* Even 30 years ago it was stated in the *Statistical Account of Bengal* that tigers, leopards, bears, hyænas, deer and wild pig, with a variety of small game, were common almost everywhere, while wild elephants and rhinoceros used to be seen. Rhinoceros have now been extinct for about half a century; the last wild elephant was shot in 1893; and the larger carnivora are also scarce owing to the gradual opening up of forest areas and the spread of cultivation. Outside the Government estates the jungle is being gradually destroyed and, with the removal of jungle, big game has almost disappeared. The Santāl, moreover, is as destructive to game as he is to jungle, and the result has been an extirpation of the smaller game, on which the larger carnivora prey, and the migration of the latter to other districts, where food is more plentiful. Not only do the Santāls kill any small game they can knock down when alone, but occasionally they organize large

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\* This account of the Fauna of the district has been prepared with the help of a note contributed by Mr. A. H. Mee, formerly in charge of the Santāl Parganas Forest Division.

drives. Hundreds of men gather together, and armed with spears, clubs, bows and arrows form themselves into two lines, which march for days together killing every beast and bird they meet.

Tigers were once common, so much so that the writer of *Sonthalia and the Southals* (1867) says that "formerly it was no uncommon thing to be awoken by the sentry, and, on going out, to see at the bottom of a long walk in the garden at Pākaur a large tiger crawling with his nose to the ground." Tigers are now very rare, those met with being probably stragglers from other districts. It is true that the presence of a tiger is at times reported by the Santāls, but the probability is that the animal is a leopard. Cases of cattle lifting are attributed to tigers, but the number of such cases is insignificant. Cows and bullocks are rarely attacked, and buffaloes even less frequently; and the fact that the young of these animals, with sheep and domestic pigs, are most usually killed would seem to point not to tigers but to leopards. Some six or seven years ago a tigress with a half-grown cub wandered into the district from the Hazārī āgh forests and caused the deaths of several persons at Katikund and Susni in the Dumkā and Goddā portion of the Dāmin-i-koh and at Rājbhita in the Goddā subdivision.

Leopards are still common throughout the district and are not restricted to any particular locality. They are met with not only in the more densely wooded areas, but also in rocky and more or less isolated peaks where vegetation is scant. One or more are always to be found in certain favoured haunts, e.g., in the hills in the vicinity of Sāldahā, in the lower hills near Narganj and Rokrābāndh, at Churli Pahār near Chandra in the Goddā Dāmin, and at the base of the hills to the west of Hiranpur in the Pākaur Dāmin. At the place last named caves, or rather large fissures in the rocks, are always occupied by one or more of these brutes, and though attempts have been made from time to time to drive them out and shoot them, they have met with little success. Close to Dumkā near the village of Kurwā, on the right of the road to Rāmpur Hāt, the Kurwā hill, which is a mass of rock and boulders with little if any vegetation, is another favourite haunt. The larger leopards occasionally take to cattle lifting and man-eating. The Santāls shoot them with poisoned arrows but the number killed in this way is small. Poisoning and trapping, which are resorted to in other districts of Bengal, are not commonly practised. Leopard cubs are often caught by the Santāls and are usually sold if a purchaser can be found.

Bears (*Melursus ursinus*) are fairly numerous in the forests of the "Old Reserve" in the Dumkā Dāmin, and are also common

in the Nunihāt hills and many other places. They favour the higher hills, from which they descend during the night to feed, and especially hills made up of rocks piled one above another, with cavities between and beneath them. Their food consists principally of forest fruits, roots, white-ants and honey. The *mahuā* flower is a particular favourite, and to obtain this they descend to the lower hills and plains. Instances of their attacking men are not unknown. Hyænas are found in the district, but are not numerous. They are met with both in forest areas and open country, a favourite place of lying-up being the *khur* thatching grass grown close to villages.

The Ungulata have few representatives. Spotted deer or *chital* (*Cervulus axis*) are found only in the "Old Reserve" area, and even there they are not numerous. Their favourite haunts are the pure bamboo forests, grass lands and mixed forests on the higher hills. Barking deer (*Cervulus muntjac*) are also met with in the more densely wooded areas and occasionally in small patches of forest but they also are nowhere numerous. One or more, however, are always to be met with in the vicinity of Koreho Pahār near the Silingi bungalow. Very few wild pig are left, and the survivors keep to the deep forests. They have been all but exterminated by the Santāls, who are fond of pork, and mercilessly hunt them down and kill them wherever found.

In the country inhabited by the aboriginal tribes game birds Game birds. have been almost exterminated. Peafowl and jungle-fowl are still found, however, chiefly in the more densely wooded tracts, besides spur-fowl (*Gallus scutalis*), which are also seen on rocky hills where vegetation is more sparse. All three species have now become rare. Grey partridge are met with in suitable localities all over the district, but are nowhere plentiful. Common or grey quail visit the *diāra* country along the Ganges in the cold weather, while bush quail and button quail are also met with all over the district, but are nowhere numerous. Common snipe and painted snipe are common in the Gangetic *shils* of the Rāimahāl subdivision. The Bengal green pigeon is a denizen of the more densely wooded areas, and some are always to be met with in the low hills in the vicinity of Silingi bungalow. Golden plover are often seen in flocks in open country during the cold weather. The bronze-winged jacana and black ibis are very common, and may be mentioned here, though they scarcely fall within the category of game birds. The former are generally found on tanks. The latter are common everywhere and are known as *turjua* among the Santāls. They are greatly sought after on account of their flesh, which the

Santals consider delicious. The common crane and demoiselle crane are occasionally to be seen in the cold weather along the Ganges, but are rare.

Among the ducks, all the usual cold weather visitors frequent, in large numbers, the *bils* near the Ganges in the Rājmahāl sub-division and the reservoirs and rivers of North Goddā. The following species are common :—the gadwall, pintail, shoveller, tufted duck, ferruginous duck, red-crested pochard, gargany, common teal and ruddy sheldrake. Of the resident ducks the whistling and cotton teal are common ; the nukhta or combeduck probably breeds in the Rājmahāl *bils*. Large flocks of geese visit the north of the district from the Ganges, after the rice crop has been harvested, to feed on the stubble. The bar-headed is the species most commonly observed.

**Fish.** In the Ganges the most common fish are *hilsā*, *rohu*, *kātlā*, *kālbaus*, *murig*, *boāl* and *shol*. The same species are also found during periods of flood in the other rivers, *viz.*, the Mor, Bānsloi, Gumāni, and Ajai.

**Reptiles.** Crocodiles are found in the Ganges, and are reported also to travel up the Ajai river in the Jāmtārā subdivision, but do not appear to come up the smaller rivers. In one stream only, *viz.*, the Tripati near Gopikandar, have they been seen. Snakes are common, including the cobra, *karait* (*Bungarus caeruleus*), *chiti* or spotted snake, and others, which are frequently found in the thatching of old houses. One of the bungalows at Goddā was, indeed, formerly known as “Snakes’ Castle” from the number of snakes found in it.\*

**CLIMATE.** Owing to its position on the borders of Bengal, Bihār and the tableland of Chotā Nāgpur, the Santāl Parganas partake in some measure of the climatic characteristics of each of those three areas. Thus, the alluvial strip of country on the east has the damp heat and moist soil characteristic of Bengal ; while the undulating and hilly portions, from Deoghar on one side to Rājmahāl on the other, are swept by the hot westerly winds of Bihār, and resemble in their rapid drainage and dry sub-soil the lower plateaux of Chotā Nāgpur. In this undulating country the winter months are very cool and the rains not oppressive ; but the heat from the end of March to the middle of June is severe, and the hot westerly winds are extremely disagreeable. On the subject of the hot winds, the following remarks of Captain Sherwill are of interest :—“A spectator standing at midday during the hot weather in any of the *parganas* that lie to the

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\* E. G. Man, *Sonthalia and the Sonthals*, 1867.

eastward of the Rājmahāl Hills, may distinctly observe the termination of the hot winds and the commencement of the humid atmosphere of Bengal. The hot wind is seen on a level with the highest peaks of the Rājmahāl Hills, which rise to 2,000 feet, and up whose western flank it has been driven from the plains of Monghyr and Bhāgalpur. It is represented by a huge yellowish-brown stratum of heated air, highly charged with minute particles of dust, and peculiarly electric. This bank or stratum extending to near the base of the Himālaya mountains, never descends again, but, lifted up and there retained by the damp atmosphere of Bengal, is lost or cooled in the upper regions of the air. The mark of separation between the heated, electric, and dust-charged atmosphere of Western and Central India and the damp air of Bengal is so defined and so nearly stationary during the day, that its height, limits and rate of progression are all capable of measurement."

On the whole, the range of temperature is not very high, except during the hot weather months of March, April and May. when the westerly winds coming from Central India cause high temperature with very low humidity: the thermometer has been known to approach  $120^{\circ}$  in the shade. At Dumkā, the headquarters station, the mean temperature falls in the cold weather months to  $64^{\circ}$  and the mean minimum temperature to  $51^{\circ}$ . In these months the temperature sometimes falls below freezing point, and water exposed at night will be found with a thin crust of ice in the morning. Mean temperature increases from  $79^{\circ}$  in March to  $88^{\circ}$  in April and May; mean maximum temperature from  $91^{\circ}$  in March to  $100^{\circ}$  in April and  $98^{\circ}$  in May; and mean minimum temperature from  $66^{\circ}$  in March to  $79^{\circ}$  in June. At this season of the year humidity falls to 49 per cent. of saturation in March and 52 per cent. in April. The usual marked change takes place with the commencement of south-west monsoon conditions in the second half of June, and there is a quick fall, chiefly in day temperatures; for the mean maximum falls from  $98^{\circ}$  in May to  $95^{\circ}$  in June, and  $89^{\circ}$  in July, whereas there is no fall of the mean minimum until July and then it is only  $1^{\circ}$ , viz., from  $79^{\circ}$  to  $78^{\circ}$ .

Rainfall, which does not exceed an inch between November and April, increases to 3.6 inches in May, owing to the influence of occasional cyclonic storms in that month. In June the rainfall is 10 inches, and in July the heaviest fall of about 14 inches occurs. August and September are also rainy months, with a fall of 13.4 and 10 inches respectively, but in October the weather is generally fine with brief periods of cloud and rain, when cyclonic

disturbances affect the west of the province. Statistics of the rainfall at the different recording stations are given below for the cold weather (November to February), the hot weather (March to May), and the rainy season (June to October), the figures shown being the averages recorded in each case. It is to be observed, however, that there are considerable variations from year to year above and below those averages, *e.g.*, in 1895 the average fall for the whole district was 39·28 inches, and in 1893 it was 71·30 inches.

STATION	Years recorded.	November to February	March to May	June to October.	Annual average
ASANBANI	6—7	1·13	3·34	51·20	55·67
BARHARWA	6—7	1·47	4·26	51·05	56·78
BARROP	5—7	1·69	2·26	47·99	51·94
BHAGYA	6—7	1·89	3·53	42·78	47·70
DEOGHAR	31	1·59	4·41	47·07	53·15
GODDA	28—29	1·54	4·43	42·71	48·68
JAMTARA	25—27	1·67	4·84	47·33	53·84
KATIKUND	7	1·90	3·27	58·40	63·57
MADHUPUR	6—7	1·44	3·42	46·98	51·84
MAHESHPUR	7	1·29	3·83	49·61	54·73
NAYA DUMKA	30	1·76	5·42	51·43	58·61
NUNIHAT	14—16	1·89	3·07	38·03	42·49
PAKAUR	24—25	1·43	6·06	52·90	60·39
RAJMAHAL	29—30	0·94	5·78	46·64	53·34
SAHIBGANJ	6—7	1·38	4·06	54·11	59·55
SARATH	5—7	1·37	3·68	47·09	52·14
SARWAN	6—7	1·70	2·26	47·03	50·99
Average	...	1·48	4·00	48·37	53·85

The following table gives meteorological statistics for Dumkā, which is 497 feet above sea-level.

MONTH.	Monthly mean 8 A.M. temperature.	Monthly mean maximum temperature.	Monthly mean minimum temperature.	Monthly mean temperature of day.*	Monthly mean 8 A.M. humidity.	Monthly average rainfall.	Monthly mean wind direction at 8 A.M.	Monthly average wind velocity in miles per hour.
January	59·8	75·7	51·2	62·3	72·9	2·059	N 43° W	1·7
February	62·8	79·7	54·2	65·8	64·7	0·70	N 51° W	1·9
March	74·3	81·4	65·6	77·8	48·9	0·81	N 73° W	3·4
April	84·0	100·1	74·6	85·9	51·8	1·02	S 13° E	3·9
May	84·8	98·4	77·3	86·2	66·2	3·59	S 51° E	5·0
June	83·2	94·0	78·7	84·7	76·8	9·96	S 42° E	4·9
July	81·7	88·6	77·6	81·9	86·8	14·14	S 34° E	3·9
August	81·2	87·7	77·1	81·0	87·1	13·41	S 50° E	3·4
September	81·4	88·2	76·3	81·1	84·4	10·01	S 31° E	3·7
October	77·8	87·6	70·8	78·9	76·3	3·91	N 10° W	1·7
November	68·3	81·4	59·3	69·7	73·7	0·31	N 23° W	1·3
December	61·8	78·7	51·3	62·7	73·7	0·16	N 41° W	1·4
Year	74·8	87·4	67·8	76·4	72·1	58·61	...	3·9

\* Means of maxima and minima temperatures corrected to true diurnal means by applying the corrections determined from the six-hourly data of Berhampore.

## CHAPTER II.

## HISTORY.

A number of stone implements have been found in the Santāl Parganas, most of which are obviously weapons or tools, such as axes, hammers, arrow-heads or agricultural implements. The most interesting are some so-called "shoulder-headed celts" similar to those found in the Malay Peninsula and Chotā Nāgpur. They are of special interest, because several writers have regarded the fact that such celts have only been found in the countries mentioned as proof that the races now settled there, viz, the Mons and Mundas, belong to the same stock, thereby implying that the shoulder-headed celts were originally manufactured and used by them. On this point the Revd. P O Bodding, of Mohulpahāri in this district, who brought to light the existence of such celts in the Santāl Parganas, writes as follows:—"So far as our present knowledge goes, we cannot say more than this: the fact of these peculiarly formed celts being found in Chotā Nāgpur and the Santāl Parganas in India, and in the delta and valley of the lower Irrawaddy—so says Sir A. Phayre in a letter printed in the Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, No 1, 1876--and nowhere else, makes it so likely as to be almost a certainty that in a former age the same peoples have either been living in the countries mentioned (and those between), or there has been some kind of communication or intercourse between the countries by migration or otherwise. If these shoulder-headed celts should be found, e.g., in the Assam Valley and Burma, they would point out where these people were living, or the line of communication. The original owners may, of course, for all we know, have been the Mon-Khmer and Munda peoples; but they may also just as well have been others."\*

The earliest inhabitants of whom there is any record appear to be the Maler (Sauriā Pahārias), who are found to this day in the north of the Rajmahal Hills. They have been identified with the Malli mentioned by Megasthenes, who visited the court

\* Further details will be found in two articles, *Stone Implements in the Santāl Parganas*, by the Revd. P. O. Bodding published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Part III (1901 and 1904).



of Chandra Gupta at Pataliputra (Patna) in 302 B. C. According to his account, the Malli were a race holding the country between the Prasii, *i.e.*, the people of Magadha or Bihār, and the Gangaridae, *i.e.*, the people of Lower Bengal. Their territory was bounded by the Ganges and contained within its limits a mountain called Mallus, which is identified with the sacred hill of Mandar in the south of the Bhāgalpur district, close to the boundary of the Goddā sub-division. The Sauria Pahārias are also believed by some to be the race referred to by the Greek geographers\* as the Suari, but the latter are generally held to be the Savars of Orissa.

We have no detailed account of this part of the country until the time of Hiuen Tsiang, a Chinese pilgrim, who visited India about 645 A. D. From the record of his travels, we learn that he visited the kingdom of Champā, the northern boundary of which extended along the Ganges from Lakhisarai to Rāj-mahāl, while the southern boundary passed through "desert wilds, in which were wild elephants and savage beasts that roamed in herds." To the east of Champā lay the kingdom of Kie-chu-u-khi-lo or Kie-ching-kie-lo, which, according to General Cunningham, was the tract of country included in the present Santāl Parganas. "The distance and bearing," he writes, "bring us to the district of Rājmahāl, which was originally called Kānkjol after a town of that name, which still exists 18 miles to the south of Rājmahāl. . . When independent, the petty state of Kānkjol most probably comprised the whole of the hill country to the south and west of Rājmahāl, with the plains lying between the hills and the Bhāgirathī river as far south as Murshidābād."

Hiuen Tsiang does not give any account of the interior of this kingdom, merely stating that, having been conquered by a neighbouring state, the towns were desolate and most of the people were scattered in villages or hamlets. He adds, however, that on the northern boundary, not far from the Ganges, was a lofty tower made of bricks and stone, which General Cunningham identifies with Teliāgarhi. "The pilgrim," he writes, "does not say what was the nature of the tower; but from his description I gather that it must have been a Buddhist building, as its four faces were ornamented with panels filled with figures of saints, Buddhas and Devas. From the mixture of brick and stone in the building, and its position on the northern frontier of the district and on the south bank of the Ganges, I am led to think that this tower was most probably situated at Teliāgarhi itself. The place was

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\* A. Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India* (1871), pp. 508, 509, W. B. Oldham, *Ethnical Aspects of the Burdwan District* (1894), p. 6.

certainly an old military post, as it completely commanded one of the three passes leading into Bengal. But it must have also been a place of consequence, as it possessed a considerable number of large statues, both Buddhist and Brahmanical. Most of these were removed to a great house at Kabalgāon (Colgong) built on the top of the hill facing the rocks, but, since the establishment of the railway close by, many of them have disappeared, no one knows where.”\*

After this, there is no record of the history of the district for many centuries, but there is an interesting reference to it in the *Bramanda* section of the *Bhaviṣhyat Purāṇa*, which was probably compiled in the 15th or 16th century A. D. from ancient materials. It refers to the tract comprising the present district and Birbhūm as Narikhandā, and describes it as follows:—“Narikhandā is a district abounding in thickets. It lies west of the Bhāgirathī and north of the Dwārikeswarī river. It extends along the Panchakuta hills on its west, and approaches Kikata on the north. The forests are very extensive, chiefly of *sakhota*, *ajuna*, and *sāl* trees with a plentiful addition of brushwood. The district is celebrated for the shrine of Vaidyanāth. The deity is worshipped by people from all quarters, and is the source of every good in the present age. Three-fourths of the district are jungle; the remaining fourth is cultivated. The soil of a small part of it is very fertile, but by far the greater portion is saline and unproductive. There is no want of water, and numerous small streams run through the forest: the principal of these is the Ajaya. In many places there are iron mines. The people are, in general, small, black and of immoral propensities, and ignorant of religious duties; a few only are attached to the name of Vishnu. They are dexterous bowmen and industrious cultivators.”†

The authentic history of the district may be said to begin with the rule of the Muhammadans, when their armies marched to and from Bengal through the Telāgarhī pass. The Muhammadan historians show that this pass, the “Key of Bengal” as it was called, was the scene of numerous battles. In 1538 A.D. Sher Shāh fortified it during the rebellion against the Emperor Humāyūn, but the entrenchments were forced by the Emperor’s army.‡ On the 12th July 1576 the decisive battle of Rājmahāl

MUHAM-  
MADAN  
PERIOD.

\* A. Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India* (1871), pp. 478-9; Reports, Arch. Surv. Ind., XV, 37-39; S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. II.

† J. Burgess, *Geography of India*, Ind. Ant., 1891, Vol. XX, p. 420.

‡ G. Stewart, *History of Bengal* (1847), pp. 77-8.

was fought in its neighbourhood. Three years before this Dāūd Khān had proclaimed himself King of Bengal and, relying on his Afghān troops, defied the Emperor Akbar. Akbar placed himself at the head of the imperial forces, and the loss of Hājipur forced Dāūd Khān to abandon Patna and fly to Tandah. On the way he stopped at Teliāgarhi and found the fortifications so strong, that he told the garrison he expected them to hold the Mughal army at bay for a year. His hopes were vain, for the Afghān troops fled and the Mughal general, Munim Khān, took possession of the pass without the loss of a man. Shortly afterwards Dāūd Khān, after some more crushing defeats, submitted and swore allegiance to Akbar. In 1575, however, Munim Khan having died, with a large portion of his army, in an epidemic which broke out at Gaur, Dāūd Khān seized the opportunity to head another rising of the Afghāns. He soon found himself in command of an army of 50,000 men, and drove the Mughal forces back to Patna. Reinforcements were hurried up under Husain Kuli Khān, the Governor of the Punjab, whom the Emperor sent to Bengal as his Viceroy in order to quell the rebellion, with the famous Rājā Todar Mal second in command. Dāūd Khān took up a strong position at Rājmahāl behind the entrenchments of Teliāgarhi, which were garrisoned by 3,000 Afghans. There he held the Mughal forces at bay for several months, but at last was compelled to give battle. Dāūd Khān led the centre of his army, while Kalāpāhār, the well-known conqueror of Orissa, commanded the right wing. Kalāpāhār having been killed, the Afghāns gave way, and Husain Kuli Khān then charged on the centre of the enemy's line, which was soon broken. Dāūd Khān himself was captured, promptly condemned as a rebel, and beheaded, his head being sent by express messenger to the Emperor at Agra as a tangible proof of the victory. This Mughal victory was of signal importance, for it ended the Afghān supremacy in Bengal and the rule of the independent Muham-madan kings; and after it the Province became a subordinate *sabak* of the Mughal empire.

The next important event in the history of the district was the establishment of Rājmahāl as the capital of Bengal in 1592. Sher Shāh had selected it as the seat of government about half a century before, but it was left to Mān Singh, Akbar's Viceroy in Bengal, to carry out this measure. From 1202 till 1576 Gaur had been the capital of the Province, except for some 60 years when it was transferred to Pandua, and more recently when Tandah had taken its place; but the Ganges had receded westward until Tandah stood a league from it, and Gaur, deserted by

the river, had become more and more unhealthy, the population being decimated by the epidemic of 1575, after which it was abandoned. It was in these circumstances that Mān Singh decided to remove the capital to Rājmahāl, where he built himself a palace and also erected a strong rampart, strengthened with bastions, which encircled the city. He is also said to have changed its name from Agmahāl to Rājmahāl, the seat of empire; subsequently, as the city grew, the Muhammadans, in complement to the Emperor, called it Akbarnagar. It did not long continue to be the capital, for in 1608 the Nawāb, Islām Khān, made his head-quarters at Dacca, that being a more central position for the defence of Bengal against the raids of Magh (Arakanese) pirates and Portuguese buccaneers.\*

Shortly after the transfer of the head-quarters, Teliāgarhi was the scene of a sanguinary battle between Prince Shāh Jahān and Ibrahim Khān, Viceroy of Bengal, brother of the Empress Nur Jahān and uncle of Shah Jahan. Shāh Jahān had risen in rebellion against his father Jahāngir and invaded Bengal. Ibrahim Khān marched from Dacca to Rājmahāl with all the forces he could collect in order to cut off his retreat, upon which Shāh Jahan hurried back from Burdwān. Ibrahim Khān, realizing that with his small forces he was incapable of holding the city against a siege, retired to the fortifications of Teliagarhi, on which were mounted a number of cannons, served, we are told, by "vagabond Europeans of different nations whom he had encouraged to enter his service." The defences, however, were mined and blown up, and Shāh Jahān's soldiers pouring through the breach put the garrison to the sword. The main battle also went against Ibrahim Khān, who rushed into the thick of the enemy crying—"My life is at the service of the Emperor. I will conquer or die." He fell covered with wounds, and his army, left without a leader, fled from the field leaving their camp to be plundered by the enemy.† This battle decided the fate of Bengal for the time being. Shāh Jahān being left undisputed master of the Province. His rule was short lived, for in 1624 he was decisively defeated by the imperial forces near Allahābād. He fell back on Rājmahāl, and, after taking from it 'the

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\*Stewart's History of Bengal (1847), pp. 118, 131.

†The account given in Stewart's History of Bengal has been followed. According to another account, Ibrahim Khān entrenched himself in the mausoleum of his son, which was in the fort and had a small rampart, and was killed close to its walls fighting heroically. His son had died in his youth and had been buried at Rājmahāl, close to the Ganges. See *Rajāsū-s-Salatin*, pp. 189-192.

household paraphernalia' which he had left there, retreated, hotly pursued, to the Deccan.

In 1639 Rājmahāl was again made the seat of government by Shāh Shujā, the second son of Shāh Jahān, on his appointment as Viceroy of Bengal. He built a splendid palace, strengthened the fortifications erected by Mān Singh, and spent large sums of money in making the town worthy of its position as the capital of Bengal. According to Stewart, 'the following year, nearly the whole of the city and the principal part of the palace were destroyed by a dreadful conflagration, in which many lives were lost and the family of the prince with difficulty escaped. About the same time, the current of the Ganges changed its bed and poured its torrents against the walls of the new capital washing away many of the stately edifices. Previous to that time, the course of the Ganges was along the northern bank, running under the walls of Gaur, but since that period, it pours its torrents against the rocks of Rājmahāl forming eddies and whirlpools, dangerous to the incautious or impatient traveller.' In spite of this, Rājmahāl appears to have continued to be the capital till 1660.

The year before, Shāh Shujā, in order to make good his claims to the throne of Delhi, which had been seized by his brother Aurangzeb, marched north with a large army, but being defeated at Kadbā, fell back on Monghyr, where he threw up entrenchments. The imperial army under Aurangzeb's son Prince Muhammad and Mīr Jumlā soon forced him to quit this position. Rājā Bihruz of Kharagpur, in spite of his professed loyalty, intrigued with Mīr Jumlā and showed him a practicable route through the hills, along which Mīr Jumlā pushed forward a large force. Shāh Shujā, finding that he was being outflanked, abandoned Monghyr and retreated to Rājmahāl, where he fortified Teliāgarhi and Sakrigāli. The imperial army followed hard after him, and, having stormed the defences at Teliāgarhi and Sakrigāli, invested Rājmahāl on one side, while Mīr Jumlā, coming through the hill passes, besieged it on the south. For six days Shāh Shujā held out, but by that time the enemy's artillery had effectually breached the fortifications, which, Bernier tells us, consisted only of 'made earth, sand, and fascines.' Shāh Shujā, realizing that the place was untenable and that the approach of the rains was likely to widen the breaches and render his retreat difficult, fled to Tandah with his family. That very night the rains broke, and Mīr Jumlā, finding pursuit impossible, was compelled to canton his army for four months at Rājmahāl. He was not left unmolested, for the troops of Shāh Shujā

frequently crossed the Ganges, fired into his camp, and kept his solders in a constant state of alarm. He therefore abandoned the city and encamped his army at some distance from the river side. The difficulties of Mir Jumlä were soon increased by the conduct of Prince Muhammad. The latter, it is said, having received a pathetic letter from the daughter of Shāh Shujā, to whom he was betrothed, resolved to join her and throw in his lot with her father. He therefore secretly intrigued with Shāh Shujā, won over a large part of the army to his cause, and went over to Tandah, where he married the princess. Mir Jumlä found the army bordering on mutiny and, deciding that only active employment would prevent an outbreak, crossed the Ganges and advancing against Shāh Shujā, decisively defeated him (1660).

After this, Rājmahāl ceased to be the capital of Bengal, which was removed to Dacca. The reasons for this change will be apparent from the account left by Tavernier, who visited Rājmahāl in January 1666 with Bernier. "Rājmahāl is a city upon the right hand of Ganges: and if you go by land you shall find the highway for a league or two paved with brick to the town. Formerly the Governors of Bengal resided here, it being an excellent country for hunting, besides that it was a place of great trade. But now the river having taken another course, above a good half-league from the city, as well for that reason as to keep in awe the king of Arakan and several Portuguese banditti, who are retired to the mouths of Ganges, and made excursions even as far as Dacca itself, both the Governor and merchants have removed themselves to Dacca, which is at present a large city and a town of great trade." Rājmahāl, however, was a mint town in 1661, to which merchants sent golden plates to be coined; and it was the head-quarters of the *Faujdār* or Governor of Akbarnagar. We find also that in the time of Murshid Kulī Khān (1704-25) an officer was sent here every year during the winter to make ice in the Rājmahāl Hills to supply the Nawāb's table. "The Nawāb," says the *Riyāzu-s-Salātn*, "had stores of ice for full twelve months, used ice daily, and received his supplies of ice from Akbarnagar. Similarly in the season of mango-fruit, which is the best of the fruits of Bengal, the superintendent of mango-supplies was posted in the *Chaklā* of Akbarnagar and he, counting the mangoes of the *khās* trees, entered them in the accounts, and showed their collection and disposal and the watchmen and carriers, and levying the expenses of carriage from the zamindārs, sent the sweet and delicious mangoes from Mālda, Katwā, Hussainpur, Akbarnagar, and other places. And the zamindārs had no power to cut down the *khās* mango-trees: on the

contrary, the mangoes of all the gardens of the aforesaid *Chakla* were attached. And this practice was more rigorously observed in the times of previous Nāzims of Bengal."

THE  
ENGLISH  
AT RAJ-  
MAHAL.

Rājmahāl was a place of some importance to the English in their early efforts to establish their trade in Bengal. When it was the capital of Shāh Shujā, they had an unofficial representative there in the person of Dr. Gabriel Boughton, who was a favourite of the Prince, having, it is said, cured a lady of his *zanāna* who was suffering from a complaint in her side. Whatever the truth of this story—and doubts have not apparently been thrown on it as on the legend that Boughton cured a daughter of the Emperor Shāh Jahān—it seems certain that Boughton had much influence with the Prince. That this was recognized by the English is clear from the following instructions given by the Captain of the *Luoness* to the agents sent from Balasore in 1650 to open up trade in Bengal. "You know," he wrote, "how necessary it will be for the better carrying on the trade of these parts to have the Prince's *pharmān*, and that Mr. Gabriel Boughton, Surgeon to the Prince, promises concerning the same. To put matters out of doubt, it is necessary that you forthwith, after our departure and the settlement of the business here and at Hooghly, proceed to Rāimahāl with one Englishman to accompany you: where being come, consult with Mr. Boughton about the business, who hath the whole contents of the Dutches' last *pharmān*, and together endeavour (if possible) that, according to Mr. Boughton's promise, the Company may have such a *pharmān* granted as may outstrip the Dutch in point of privilege and freedom, that so they may not have cause any longer to boast of theirs. You know what I have written to Mr. Boughton about it, who, without doubt, will be very faithful in the business and strive that the same may be procured, with as little charge as may be to the Company, knowing that the less the charge is, the more will be the reputation, according to his own advice in his last unto me." It appears that Boughton must have been faithful in the business, for an entry in the Court Book of 1674 shows that he obtained a *pharmān* from Shāh Shujā giving the English liberty to trade in Bengal.†

\* C. R. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, I, 26-7. †The spelling has been modernized.

† A detailed account of the part played by Boughton in securing for the Company liberty of trade in Bengal will be found in an article by Lt.-Col Crawford, I.M.S., *The Legend of Gabriel Boughton*, published in the Indian Medical Gazette Jan. 1909. In an article on Rājmahāl in the Calcutta Review, vol. xixvi, p. 124 it is stated that "the old graveyard to the north-west of the hotel contains the remains of Surgeon Boughton."

With the fall of Shāh Shujā the difficulties of the English began. Their boats were stopped at Rājmahāl by the new Governor Mir Jumla as they came down the Ganges laden with saltpetre, and when their Agent at Hooghly had the audacity to attempt reprisals by seizing one of the Governor's vessels, Mir Jumla threatened to expel them from the country. The threat was effectual, for the English apologized and restored the vessel. After this they appear to have been on good terms with the Governor; and by 1676 they had established a small agency at Rājmahāl, in connection with the Mughal mint, to which they sent their treasure to be coined into rupees. This agency was in 1681 placed in charge of Robert Hedges, who was subsequently the Company's President of Council.\*

In 1696 the rebellion of Subha Singh broke out. The rebel chief was joined by the Afghāns of Orissa under Rahīm Khān, and the whole country west of the Ganges from Rājmahāl to Midnapore was overrun by them, Rājmahāl being captured and the property of the English seized. At length, in April 1697, the levies of the Nawāb Ibrahim Khān were gathered together, and placed under the command of his son Zabardast Khān, who retook the town, but refused to restore their goods to the English, who appealed to Azīm-us-Shān, grandson of the Emperor, who had been appointed Nawāb in the place of Ibrahim Khān. Further trouble followed a few years later, for Aurangzeb issued a proclamation ordering the arrest of all Europeans in India, and in 1702 all the servants of the Company at Rājmahāl were seized with their effects.

On the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 Azīm-us-Shān marched with 20,000 horse to support his father Shāh Alam in the struggle for the throne, leaving his son Farrukhsiyar, some of the women of his seraglio, and his treasure at Rājmahāl† Shāh Alam having ascended the throne under the title of Bahādur Shāh, Azīm-us-Shān returned to Rājmahāl, where in April 1708 the English sent an envoy with an offer of Rs. 15,000 (besides two looking glasses for the Prince and another for the Diwān, Murshid Kuli Khān), in return\* for authority to trade free of duties. A month later the Council found to their disgust that their agent Siva Charan had without their authority given to the Prince an order on them\* for Rs. 36,000. After a long consultation, they decided on sending Fazl Muhammad, one of their most trustworthy

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\* Stewart's History of Bengal, pp. 180-1; Early Annals of the English in Bengal, I, 84, 53, 376; II, xxix.

† Seir-ul-Matakhari, I, 40, 41.



native servants, to Rājmahāl with orders to send Siva Charan under a guard to Calcutta to answer for his conduct. On the 22nd October Fazl Muhammad returned from Rājmahāl, bringing still more unpalatable news. The Prince and the Treasurer, he said, in spite of their promise to give a new order for freedom of trade for Rs. 36,000, now absolutely refused to do so unless Rs. 50,000 were given as a present to themselves and Rs. 1,00,000 were paid into the Emperor's treasury at Surat. The Council retaliated by threatening to stop all the Mughal shipping in the Hooghly and order all British subjects to withdraw from Bengal. The threat was not carried out, and we find that Mr. Cawthorpe, the English agent at Rājmahāl, was seized by Azīm-us-Shān, who refused to release him or let the Company's boats pass, till he had received a bill of exchange for Rs. 14,000. The Council then repeated their threat to stop the Mughal shipping and concentrate all their servants at Calcutta—a measure which was expected to paralyze the trade of Hooghly and Rājmahāl as “nearly all the best Captains in the employ of the Diwān of the Prince were Englishmen.”\*

Next year (1709) the Prince and the Diwan Murshid Kuli Khān left Bengal for the imperial court, and Sher Buland Khān was sent to rule the Province in their stead. He at once proceeded to stop the boats at Rājmahāl, and it was not until the English paid Rs. 45,000 that they obtained an order granting them the privilege of free trade in Bengal. In 1710 Prince Farrukhsiyar came to Rājmahāl as the representative of his father Azīm-us-Shān, and the English at once sent an agent to conciliate him, receiving in return a dress of honour for the President. The following year Khān Jahān Bahādur Izzud-daula, who had been appointed Deputy Governor, arrived at Rajmahal, where he seems to have done his best to ingratiate himself with the English by allowing their saltpetre boats to pass unmolested down the river and by granting them an order for free trade. Great confusion followed the death of the Emperor Bahādur Shāh in 1712. Izzud-daula fortified himself at Rājmahāl, as well as he could, guarding the neighbouring passes and intercepting all communications. He does not appear, however, to have offered any resistance to Farrukhsiyar, after he had himself proclaimed as Emperor at Patna, for the new Emperor advanced through the Teliāgarhī pass on his way to Murshidābād without striking a blow.†

\* *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 148-50, 161, 170, 180, 181, 198, 303.

† *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 186, 329, 342; Vol. II, pp. xxiii, xxiv, xxviii.

Rājmahāl did not come into prominence during the last days of Muhammadan rule. It was taken in 1742 by the Marāthās, who, we are told, "held the town and district of Rājmahāl, and left nothing to Ali Vardi Khān but the city of Murshidābād and the country on the other side of the Ganges."\* Apparently they found a ready passage through the central valley of the hills and year after year swept down the Margo pass to the lowlands of Bengal. Subsequently in 1757 Sirāj-ud-daula was captured here by Mir Dāūd, the brother of Mir Jāfar Ali Khan, who was then *Faujdar* or Governor of Rājmahāl. Sirāj-ud-daula, flying northwards after the battle of Plassey, went ashore near the town, being weary with confinement in the boats. In spite of his disguise, he was recognized by a man named Dānā Shāh, who had some time before offended Sirāj-ud-daula and had been punished by having his ears and nose cut off. "Thus mutilated and disgraced, he was living as a *fakir* at the very spot where Sirāj-ud-daula's evil genius led him to land. Escaping quietly from the spot, Dānā Shāh gave information to Mir Dāūd, who promptly sent a guard to seize and conduct him to Murshidābād. Other officers laid hands on what property they could, and Mir Kāsim, son-in-law and later on supplanter of Mir Jāfar, took Lutfunnissa and her casket of jewels supposed to be worth many lakhs of rupees." A few hours later the advance guard of Law's detachment reached Rājmahāl too late to save Siraj-ud-daula, for he was hurried off to Murshidābād, where he was murdered by Mirān, the son of Mir Jāfar Ali Khān.† Mirān himself was buried at Rājmahāl, having been killed by lightning in the Champāran district when on a campaign against the Nawāb of Purnea in 1760. According to the *Sair-ul-Mutākhharin*, "his body was put in a coffin and carried rapidly to the Ganges, where it was put into a boat, and hurried down the river as far as Rājmahāl; but the abominable stench that exhaled from it obliged the messengers to land it immediately, and it was buried in a spot which now goes by the name of his monument." Three years later, in 1763, Udhua Nullah, six miles to the south, was the scene of Major Adams' victory over Mir Kāsim Ali, a description of which will be found in the article on that place in Chapter XVI.

The early history of British administration is mainly a record of their attempts to pacify the Pahārias of the Rājmahāl hills, called in the early correspondence the 'highlanders,' 'hillmen' or 'hill race.' The northern section use the designation Male and are

BRITISH  
RULE.  
Pacifica-  
tion of the  
Pahārias.

\* *Sair-ul-Mutākhharin*, I, 395; Stewart's *History of Bengal*, p. 234.

† C. R. Hill, *Bengal in 1756-57*, I, clxxviii, ccvi, ccvii; III, 210, 212, 213.

commonly referred as the Maler (the plural of Māl), a term which will be used in this account to distinguish them from the other branch of the race, the Māl Pahārias of the hilly and wooded country to the south and west. This race of aborigines, abhorring regular labour, eked out their meagre crops by the chase, and found a still more congenial occupation as robbers and cattle-lifters. The Mughal Government, seeing little prospect of obtaining revenue from their barren hills, had been content to leave the control of them to *mansabdārs*, of whom the chief were members of the Khetauri family of Manihāri. The founder of the family is said to have seized the fort of Lakrāgarh and helped Akbar's general Mān Singh to force the defiles through the hills, when he was invading Bengal. He was rewarded by the grant, as a *mansab jāgir*, of the tract in which the Maler lived, and his descendants were overlords of the country from Rājmahāl and Pakaur on the east of the hills to Colgong and Godda on their western face. Whether the control they exercised was effective or, as is more probable, was merely nominal, they appear to have been on good terms with the Maler till the middle of the 18th century when the Maler got completely out of hand.

Some of their chiefs having been treacherously murdered, the Maler stormed Lakrāgarh, drove out the Khetauri *jāgirdārs*, and commenced a series of raids on the lowland villages, which went unpunished during the political unrest at that time. A climax was reached during the famine of 1770, which pressed with peculiar severity upon the alluvial strip of country lying between the Rājmahāl Hills and the Ganges. The outposts at the foot of the hills, which were manned by *ghātwāls*, were abandoned, and the plains thus lay at the mercy of the Pahārias who, owing to their practice of living upon jungle foods, had escaped the extremity of distress. It was, therefore, in the years following the famine of 1770 that the raids of the hillmen upon the low country became most frequent and most systematic. Plunder, no doubt, was their main object, but many of their inroads were in the first instance instigated by the landholders, who were in the habit of offering the Pahārias a free passage through their own lands, on condition that they ravaged those of the neighbouring zamindārs. The terror they occasioned was so widespread, that the alluvial country was deserted by its cultivators. No boat dare moor after dusk on the southern bank of the Ganges; and even the Government mail-runners, who in those days passed along the skirts of the hills, by way of Rājmahāl and the Teliāgarhi pass, were frequently robbed and murdered at the foot of the hills. The evil reputation the Pahārias won by such raids may be gathered from the

remarks of Bishop Heber in 1824 :—"A deadly feud existed for the last 40 years between them and the cultivators of the neighbouring lowlands, they being untamed thieves and murderers, continually making forays, and the Muhammadan zamīndārs killing them like mad dogs or tigers, whenever they got them within gunshot "

• While the Māl to the north were committing these outrages without restraint, the Māl Pahāriās to the south were engaged in similar depredations, which reduced the people along the border to a state of terror. In these outrages they were supported by the *ghātwāls*, such as the Bhuiyā *ghātwāl* of Lakshmipur, and by the zamīndārs, such as the proprietor of Sultānābād. "The hill people," wrote Cleveland in 1783, "are generally employed for plundering by the *ghātwāls* and zamīndāri officers. It has been almost a general custom with the low country inhabitants of Sultānābād, Rājshāhi and Bīrbhūm to employ the hill people in plundering each other's villages. And almost every man has been so deeply concerned, that even the sufferers have been afraid to complain lest their iniquitous practices should be brought to light." These Māl Pahāriās are presumably the hillmen alluded to as follows by the Judge of the Benares Division in 1808—"At an early period of British administration that tract of country lying between Bīrbhūm and Bhāgalpur was in a state of extreme disorder. The inhabitants were in open arms against Government and its other subjects. A perpetual savage warfare was maintained by them against the inhabitants of the plains, and they were proscribed and hunted down like wild beasts ; so that I have been informed by a gentleman who was at the time Collector of Bīrbhūm, their heads were brought to him by basket loads\* "

The necessity of bringing to book these freebooters forced itself on the attention of Warren Hastings. Acting on the suggestion of his military adviser, General Barker, he raised in 1772 a special corps about 800 strong, and placed it under the command of Captain Brooke, who was made Military Governor of the disturbed tract, *i.e.*, the north of this district and the south of Monghyr and Bhāgalpur—the Jungleterry (Jungle Tarai) as it was called. His orders were to subdue the hill robbers and rebellious zamīndārs, and having subdued them and re-established order, to induce them to become cultivators instead of marauders and conform to the settled ways of peace. During the two years he spent in the hills, Captain Brooke did much to carry out the policy laid down by Warren Hastings. In 1773 he

Captain  
Brooke.

stormed the fort of Tiur, which held out till cannon were brought against it; and a number of successful expeditions in different parts of the hills helped, if not to break up, at least to disperse the bands of marauders and make the Pahārias feel his power. At the same time, Brooke won the confidence of his enemies by his treatment of the prisoners he took and of their women and children, and induced them to come down and settle in the cultivable land below the hills. In 1774 he reported that he had founded no less than 283 villages between Udhua and Barkop, and in December of that year Warren Hastings proudly announced in a Despatch to the Court of Directors—"By the battalion employed in the Jungleterry, a tract of country which was considered as inaccessible and unknown, and only served as a receptacle for robbers, has been reduced to government, the inhabitants civilized, and not only the reduction of the revenues, which was occasioned by their ravages, prevented, but some revenue yielded from this country itself, which a prosecution of the same measures will improve." Short as his tenure of office was, Captain Brooke may justly be described as the pioneer of civilization in the Rajmahal Hills.

Captain  
Browne.

His work was carried on by Captain James Browne, who in 1774 took over charge of the hill corps and till 1778 was in charge of the Jungle Tarai. During these years Captain Browne was busy in suppressing a rebellion of the Bhuiyās, who ravaged the surrounding country under Jagannāth Deo of Lakshmipur, in repressing the Pahārias and in bringing Ambar and Sultanābād to submission. His chief claim to fame, however, was the preparation of a scheme for the pacification and future administration of the Pahārias, which was afterwards elaborated and carried into effect by Cleveland. The main feature of his scheme was the recognition of their tribal system. The hills were at this time divided into different divisions called *parganas* or *tappas*, each under a chief called a *sardār*, who sometimes had one or more assistants called *naibs*. The people themselves were settled in villages, each of which claimed a separate hill or range of hills and was presided over by a village chief, or headman, called *mānjhi*. Browne proposed that this system of chiefs should be recognized and that their services should be enlisted for the preservation of peace and order. All transactions with the hill people were to be carried on through the *sardārs* and *mānjhis*, and intercourse with the inhabitants of the plains was to be encouraged by establishing markets on the outskirts of the hills. Those *sardārs* whose *tappas* adjoined the public road were to be given stipends to prevent their making raids; and the old *chauhāndi* or

chain of outposts,\* which had been abandoned in 1770, was to be re-established and maintained by Government until the service lands attached to them had been brought under cultivation. The control of these outposts was to be made over to *thānādārs* or police officers appointed by Government, who were again to be subordinate to *sazdāwāls* or divisional superintendents. The police force was further to be strengthened by conferring grants of lands below the hills on invalid sepoys, on condition that they settled on their allotments and gave assistance in the event of a Pahāria inroad. This scheme was sanctioned by Government in 1778, but next year, before he could carry it out, Captain Browne was directed to make over charge to Mr. Augustus Cleveland, who had been stationed at Rajmahal in 1773 as Assistant to the Collector, had been transferred to Bhāgalpur in 1776, and was now appointed Collector.

The correspondence between Cleveland and Warren Hastings shows that soon after his appointment he had sketched out the lines of his policy for the treatment of the Pahārias. He appears to have been impressed by their simplicity and truthfulness, and accepted their claim that they had always been independent, having been only connected with the lowland Rājās as subordinate allies. This belief in their good qualities and in their former independence inspired Cleveland to formulate a benevolent policy, to carry out which he applied for undivided authority over them. In his first letter to Warren Hastings, written in November 1779, he urged the necessity of the hills being under one authority and administered on one system. "Unless," he wrote, "the whole range of hills are put under one authority, and the same system of governing them adopted throughout, all the pains I am taking to put them in my own district on a proper footing (particularly those to the southward of the eastern and western ranges, the one joining with Ambar and the other running close upon the back of Sultānābād) will be in vain, as I am myself thoroughly convinced that all the inhabitants of the hills may in a short time be induced to submit. As a proof of which, within these nine months I have had the most flattering experience of the good effects to be expected from the system I have adopted, no less than forty-seven hill chiefs and all their adherents having voluntarily submitted to me and taken an oath of allegiance to Government during that time; and I make no doubt, if the same system continues to be adopted, there is not a chief in that

Augustus  
Cleveland.

\* The *zāmfīndārs* at the foot of the hills had been granted *jāgīr* or service lands in consideration of maintaining these outposts to guard the passes. They are said to have been so close, that the firing of a musket at one gave the alarm to the next.

vast extent of country who will not gladly renounce his hitherto precarious and desperate way of life for the ease and comforts he will enjoy in being obedient to, and under the protection of, a mild and regular government. They have never yet been fairly put to the test how far their dispositions may incline them to be upon good terms with us. We have till lately considered them as enemies, and they have been treated accordingly. It is but consonant with our own principles of justice and humanity to use every means in our power to avoid a state of warfare; why should they be denied to this unfortunate people? I must do those who have submitted the justice to say—and I call all the inhabitants of this country in general to witness—that the hill people have not for many years been so quiet as they have been for these last eight or nine months, except, as I before mentioned, near the boundary of Ambar.”

Subsequently in a letter from Sakrigah, dated 21st November 1780, Cleveland proposed a comprehensive plan which throws such light on the state of the country and on his principles, that it may be quoted at length. “These people, in general, are now become so sensible of the advantages to be derived from a firm attachment and submission to Government that many of them have not scrupled to declare they would for ever renounce all unlawful practices of robbery, murders and devastations if Government would point out and secure to them the means of subsistence, the want of which has frequently obliged them to commit acts, they seem to have some idea, are not only improper but inhuman. This naturally led into a proposal which I have long had in meditation, and is grounded on the following principles. The inhabitants of the hills have in fact no property: a mere subsistence is all they seem to require, to obtain which the means appear as a secondary consideration. The first question that occurs, therefore, is whether it is for the interest of Government to supply the means of subsistence for a certain time, or to suffer the inhabitants of the hills to commit devastations on the country, as they have done for many years past. Certainly, the former. For although the losses which Government has experienced in its receipts of revenue on this account have, in fact, been trifling owing to the rigid observance of the engagements entered into with the zamindars and farmers, yet the sufferings of the low country inhabitants during the hill insurrections are not to be described. To make friends therefore with the hill chiefs is, with all due submission, an object worthy the attention of Government. In the memory of the oldest inhabitants they never expressed themselves so earnestly for an accommodation as at present.

"The disbursement and, of course, the circulation of money in the hills by Government appears to me the most likely bait to ensure the attachment of the chiefs, and at the same time nothing will be so conducive to the civilization of the inhabitants as to employ a number of them in our service. On these principles I have taken the liberty to make the following proposal which the hill people have cheerfully agreed to provide they meet with your approbation. (1) That each manjei or chief, estimated at about 400, shall furnish one or more men as they may be required to be incorporated into a corps of archers. (2) That a chief shall be appointed to every 50 men and shall be accountable for the good behaviour of their respective division in the corps. (3) That the corps for the present shall act immediately under the orders of the Collector of Boglipore and be employed in his district only. (4) That the enemies of Government are to be considered as enemies by the hill people, and that it shall be expressly and particularly the duty of the corps to bring all refractory hill chiefs and Gautwalls to terms or to expel them from their country, and treat them as enemies wherever they may be found. (5) That each hill chief commanding a division in the corps shall have an allowance of Rs. 5 per mensem, the common people Rs. 3; and effectually to secure the manjeis or chiefs of the several hills in a firm attachment to Government, each chief supplying a common man for the corps shall receive a monthly allowance of Rs. 2, subject however to such restrictions as may be thought necessary in case of misbehaviour. (6) That each man in the corps shall have two turbans, two cummerbunds, two shirts, two pairs of junghees and a purple jacket annually."

Cleveland estimated the annual cost of this scheme at Rs. 29,440, which he admitted appeared to be "an enormous disbursement, where no apparent advantage to the Company's revenue was likely to be immediately derived from it." He added, however, that the scheme deserved consideration in view of the advantages likely to accrue to "a race of people hitherto little better than savages, who will in course of time become useful members to the community in the very heart of your dominions, and of the confidence which the inhabitants of the adjacent country would enjoy when they were no longer apprehensive of continued devastations and murders." Warren Hastings objected to the enrolment of the corps of archers on the ground of its heavy expense; but sanctioned another scheme which Mr. Cleveland proposed for granting allowances of Rs. 10 a month to all *sardars* and of Rs. 5 a month to their *naiibs* or deputies; *mānjhis* were to receive no allowances at all.



The chiefs of the northern hills gladly accepted the allowances, but they were refused by the chiefs in the hills to the south, on the ground that they were exposed to inroads from Ambar (Pākaur) and Sultānābād (Maheshpur). For these reasons wrote Cleveland in September 1780, "the chiefs in question declined to accept the allowances, unless similar arrangements take place in Ambar and Sultānābād, and the chiefs and deputies there are bound by the same penalties to be answerable for the good order and management of their respective districts." The remedy he proposed was the transfer of these two *parganas* (then in Rājshāhi) to his jurisdiction, and this measure was carried out in 1781. The result was the extension of the hill system to the Māl Pahārias, of whom a portion only resided in the hills, the rest being found in the rolling country to the south and west, where they were the ryots of the zamindārs in whose estates they had settled.

Next year (1782) the enrolment of the corps of archers was sanctioned, mainly in consequence of the approval of the scheme by General Sir Eyre Coote, before whom Cleveland had laid it when on his way up-country through Bhāgalpur. The strength of the corps was about 1,300, and the men were armed with bows and arrows, their commandant being one Jaurah, once a noted bandit, who, according to Cleveland, was the first inhabitant of the hills to enter the service of Government. Bishop Heber tells us that he was "the Rob Roy or, perhaps, more strictly speaking, the Roderic Dhu of the Rājmahāls, the most popular of all others among his own countrymen, and the most dreaded by the lowlanders. The choice was fully justified by the event, Jourah having remained through life a bold, active and faithful servant of the Company in different enterprises against outlaws, both in the Rāmghar hills and his own mountains." Within a year of its enlistment the corps had proved its worth, Cleveland reporting in February 1783:—"Since the establishment of the corps of hill archers, this is the third time I have had occasion to employ them against their brethren. And as they have always succeeded in the business they have been sent upon, I flatter myself the Honourable Board will not only be convinced of the utility and attachment of the corps, but that they will have full confidence in the general system which I have adopted for the management of this wild and extensive country." Shortly after this, sanction was given to a proposal of Cleveland that the corps should be drilled and armed like regular sepoy, and also (in 1782) to his suggestion that offences committed by the hill people should be withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts and tried by a tribunal of chiefs presided over by himself.

Two years later Cleveland died at the early age of 29. The verdict of his contemporaries on his work will be found in the inscription on the monument erected to his memory at Bhāgalpur. It runs as follows:—To the memory of Augustus Cleveland, Esq., late Collector of the Districts of Bhaugulpore and Rajamahall, who, without bloodshed or the terror of authority, employing only the means of conciliation, confidence, and benevolence, attempted and accomplished the entire subjection of the lawless and savage inhabitants of the Jungleterry of Rajamahall, who had long infested the neighbouring lands by their predatory incursions, inspired them with a taste for the arts of civilised life, and attached them to the British Government by a conquest over their minds—the most permanent, as the most rational mode of dominion. The Governor-General and Council of Bengal, in honour of his character and for an example to others, have ordered this monument to be erected. He departed this life on the 13th of January 1784, aged 29.” The same high estimation of his work is expressed in more stilted language in a monody of over 150 lines composed by Lord Teignmouth, which will be found in the *Asiatic Annual Register* of 1799 (pp. 191-194).

In the short time Cleveland had ruled over the Pahārias, he had gained their confidence, and to this day they revere the memory of Chilimili Sāheb, as they call him. The secret of his success appears to have been his personal influence and his real sympathy with these primitive people. He went among them unarmed and almost unattended, made frequent shooting excursions in the hills, distributed presents among them, and gave feasts to hundreds of the hillmen at a time. He also established regular bazars in the villages at the foot of the hills, to which he encouraged them to bring down and sell their produce, such as game, wax, hides and honey. He gave them wheat and barley seed, and encouraged cultivation by the assurance that they should not be taxed, and that none but their own chiefs should have authority over them.

There can be little doubt that Cleveland's policy was effectual in pacifying the Pahārias and that its good effects continued for nearly 40 years after his death. This is clear from the remarks of Mr. Ward in 1827. “I have,” he wrote, “seen a great deal” of this country and have been in the habit of frequent intercourse with the inhabitants; the form of police as established in the hills appears to me to be well calculated for the country and not, as far as I am able to judge, capable of admitting of improvement. Crime and affrays are, I believe, of rare occurrence there, but when they are committed, the *sardars* never fail to

deliver up the delinquent to take his trial before the proper authority. Under the present system the hill people are quiet and content. I ascribe this to that good policy which dictated making the *sardars* the governors over this rude race and solely responsible for the preservation of peace and good order in their country. However rude the people may be considered, they are extremely tenacious of the rights which were conferred upon them by Mr. Cleveland; they are proud of the offices to which they were appointed by their great benefactor, especially that which appointed them judges in the trials of their countrymen; and exercise of these functions gives them, in the eyes of their countrymen, an importance which ensures on all occasions respect and obedience."

One feature of Cleveland's system still survives, the *Pahāria sardars*, *naibs* and *mānyhis* being stipendiaries of Government. They are paid sums varying from Rs. 10 to Rs. 2 per month, in return for which all they have to attend the Magistrate's court periodically and report offences and vital statistics. "It is," writes Mr. H. McPherson, I.C.S., "a somewhat expensive link with civilization, costing Government over Rs. 13,000 annually, but in justice to Mr. Cleveland it should be remembered that he did not intend the arrangement to be more than temporary. Its object was to eke out the hill people's scanty means of subsistence and be a guarantee of good order till the arts of civilization should have taken root amongst them, for Mr. Cleveland confidently believed that at no distant date they would descend to the plains and take to cultivation and manufactures. The natural indolence of the mountaineers and their aversion to sustain honest labour were perhaps sufficient without the encouragement of the pensions to prevent the desired result . . . Reflections have been cast on the lavish expense of Mr. Cleveland's system and doubts have been entertained as to its necessity, but there can be no doubt that it was immediately and continuously effective in securing the good behaviour of the *Pahārias* and the freedom of the surrounding country from the troubles which had so long afflicted it. It was also, in the long run a financial success, for one of its results was to deprive adjacent zamindārs of even that nominal control which they may have once exercised over the hill people; and thus the way was paved for the separation of the *Dāmin-i-koh* as a Government estate, the development of which has added so materially to the land revenue resources of the district. This separation might have happened apart from Cleveland's hill system, but the hill system made it inevitable."

Other schemes devised by Cleveland for the benefit of the *Pahārias* fell to the ground after his death. For some years

the Hill Corps, to which the title of the Bhāgalpur Hill Rangers was now given, remained a serviceable body of men—largely, it appears, owing to the appointment of Lieutenant Shaw to its command in 1787. Later, however, it became “a mere rabble addicted to all sorts of vices and disorders.” The hill assemblies or tribunals, when no longer kept together by the personal influence of Cleveland, became almost unmanageable. Considerable difficulty was experienced in getting the chiefs to meet at all; and when present they would not attend to the proceedings of the court, while their sentences were hasty and capricious. It was found too that even when the assemblies could be induced to do their work, the power they had been entrusted with was too uncontrolled and that the exemption of the Pahārias from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts was a measure of doubtful policy. Cleveland’s plans for teaching simple manufactures and supplying them with seeds and agricultural implements were not carried on; the school he started for their education was dropped; the stipends promised to the tribal chiefs for maintaining peace and order, though regularly paid by Government, did not reach them; and the zamindārs encroached on their lands.

An attempt to remedy this state of affairs was made by the Marquis of Hastings, Governor-General from 1814-23. He made a short excursion into the Rājmahāl Hills with Lady Hastings, and promised to send them a quantity of seed potatoes and a stock of agricultural implements—for they still used only sharpened stakes to dig the ground—but unfortunately his promise was overlooked. He also revived the school started by Cleveland, and reorganized the Hill Rangers, though he was unable to carry out his intention of arming two companies with rifles, because, it is said, the men disliked the service exceedingly, having a strong objection to wearing green.\*

The breakdown of Cleveland’s system may be ascribed to the want of interest shown by his successors, with the exception of Mr. Fombelle. It was during his time that the rules introduced by Cleveland for the trial of criminal cases by the hill assembly were incorporated in Regulation I of 1796, which provided that the Magistrate should commit all important cases to be tried before an assembly of hill chiefs. The Magistrate was to attend the trial as Superintending Officer, and confirm or modify the sentence, if not exceeding fourteen years’ imprisonment. Higher sentences were referred to the Nizāmat Adālat, as the Supreme Criminal Court was then called. This system continued till 1827, when the

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\* Bishop Heber’s *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India*, 1828.

hillmen were declared amenable to the ordinary courts, but some of the hill *mānjhis* were to sit with the Magistrate as assessors, and the *mānjhis* were also to settle disputes about land and succession, and to decide claims to money, if the claim was not for more than Rs. 100. Mr. Fombelle also succeeded in obtaining sanction in 1795 to the proposal that *pargana* Belpātā should be transferred from Birbhūm and brought under the hill system—a proposal made by Cleveland some years before—and also the hill portion of *pargana* Nuni to the south-east.

After Mr. Fombelle's time, the administration of the hills was left with very inadequate supervision in the hands of Abdul Rasūl Khān, who had done good work under Captain Browne and had been made *sazawāl* under Cleveland. He now became practically ruler of the hills, and is to this day remembered by the hill people as "Con Sāheb." He abused the trust reposed in him, and his corruption and tyranny led to numerous complaints. These complaints, and the disputes between the hillmen and the lowland zamīndārs, caused Government in 1818 to depute Mr. Sutherland, Joint Magistrate of Bhāgalpur, to enquire into his conduct, to report generally on the measures necessary for the future administration of the hills, and to ascertain on what tenures the Pahārias held their land and what were their relations to Government. After a detailed enquiry, in the course of which he traversed the whole of the tract, Mr. Sutherland recommended in 1819—(1) That Government should declare that the hill tract occupied by the hill people was the property of Government alone. (2) That the level country skirting the external ranges of hills was distinct from the adjoining zamīndāri estates and was also its property. (3) That measures should be taken for defining the extent of the skirts of the hills and the hilly tract.

These recommendations were accepted by Government in 1823, and in 1824 the Hon'ble Mr. John Petty Ward was deputed to demarcate the Dāmin-i-koh with the assistance of a survey officer named Captain Tanner. The work was concluded in 1833, and in 1837 Mr. Pontet was placed in charge of its revenue administration under the title of Superintendent of the Dāmin-i-koh, being specially instructed to give the Santāls, who were now pouring in, every encouragement in the work of clearing jungle. So successfully did he fulfil his task, that by 1851 the revenue had been raised from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 43,919, and the influx of Santāls into the Dāmin-i-koh had been so great, that they numbered 82,795 residing in 1,473 villages. According to a contemporary notice in the *Friend of India*:—"With little more jurisdiction than that of a Deputy Collector, he (Mr. Pontet) has acquired among these wild people a

power that is almost regal. The most observant wayfarers can instantly discover the circle of Mr. Pontet's jurisdiction; for whereas beyond it there are villages containing five thousand inhabitants without one solitary hackery, within it there are broad roads from village to village, and the country is alive with the activity of a quiet and prosperous people." A few years after these words were written the Santāls broke out in rebellion.

The Santāls seem to have settled first in the district between 1790 and 1810, having made their way northwards from Birbhūm, where they had been brought in about 1790 to clear jungle and drive out the wild beasts which then infested the country. The exact date at which the first body of immigrants came is not known, but the unpublished manuscript of Buchanan Hamilton shows that a number of them had settled in the Dumkā subdivision by 1809, "having come last from Birbhūm in consequence of the annoyance which they received from its zamīndārs." Between 1815 and 1830 there appears to have been a further advance of the Santāls. In 1818 Mr. Sutherland found them busy clearing the forest below the hills in the Goddā subdivision; in 1827 Mr. Ward noticed that they had settled in the extreme north of the same subdivision; while a report of Mr. Dunbar, Collector of Bhagalpur, shows that by 1836 no less than 427 villages had been established in the Damin-i-koh "inhabited by the Santāls and Bhuiyas, but chiefly by the former." Under the administration of Mr. Pontet, who was directed to give them every encouragement in clearing jungle, the Santāls spread far afield without much opposition from the idle Pahāriās, and even penetrated to the Burhait valley in the heart of the Rajmahal Hills. "This valley," wrote Captain Sherwill in 1851, "viewed from any of the surrounding hills affords an admirable example of what can be done with natives, when their natural industry and perseverance are guarded and encouraged by kindness. When Mr. Pontet took charge of the hills in 1835, this valley was a wilderness, inhabited here and there by hillmen; the remainder was overrun with heavy forest, in which wild elephants and tigers were numerous; but now in 1851 several hundred substantial Santāl villagers, with an abundance of cattle and surrounded by luxuriant crops, occupy this hitherto neglected spot. The hillmen have with a few exceptions retired to the hills."

SANTAL  
REBEL-  
LION.

It was among the Santāl settlers in the Dāmin-i-koh that the rebellion of 1855, known as the *hul*, had its origin, the older settlers of the Dumkā subdivision taking little part in it. The causes of the rebellion were several, the Santāls themselves declaring that their chief grievances were the prevalence of false-

hood, the negligence of the *sahibs*, the extortion of the *mahājans*, the corruption of the *amlā*, and the oppression of the police. All these grievances were due very largely to the absence of European officers and the presence of Bengali and other *Dikku*, i.e., non-Santal, immigrants, who had flocked in to carry on trade and money-lending among the Santals. The district as now constituted was divided between Bhāgalpur and Bīrbhūm, and the only resident Magistrate was at Deoghar. The revenue administration of the Dāmin-i-koh was under the Superintendent, assisted by four *naib sasāwals*, who used to visit it in order to collect rent and settle disputes about lands. The Superintendent was the only European official who visited the Dāmir, and he had no authority to deal with civil and criminal cases. The Santal had therefore to make his way to the courts at Deoghar and Bhāgalpur. Justice was thus far off; the Bengali *mahājan* was at his door. The Santal, thriftless and improvident, easily got into debt; exorbitant interest was charged, and once he had contracted a debt he had little chance of escape.

If his creditor sued him, all the evidence the Santal could produce was a knotted string, in which the knots represented the number of rupees he had received and the spaces between them the years which had elapsed since he took the loan. The usurer, on the other hand, had his ledgers and day-book ready, all carefully written up, and a bond or a deed of sale, or a mortgage, perhaps, forged for the occasion. Often he did not trouble to refer to the courts to realise his capital and interest. He simply sent his agents and swept off his debtor's cattle. The Santal, ignorant and timid, felt that it was a hopeless task for him to obtain redress against a wealthy oppressor. He seldom lodged a complaint, for his sole wealth consisting of his cattle, he could not fee *mukhtārs* and *amlā*. Should he overcome these difficulties and venture to complain, he probably would only get an order on the police to enquire and report, and the police played into the hands of the money-lender. In the Dāmin-i-koh, therefore, Government asserted its position neither through the courts nor through the executive. The courts were remote and practically inaccessible; their processes were served by corrupt *amlā* and peons. The executive was represented by the *naib sasāwals* or *darogas*, also corrupt and oppressive, who were ready instruments in the hands of the *mahājan*, besides making exactions on their own account. Not only did the Santals find themselves neglected, but they saw very different treatment given to their neighbours, the Pahārias, who had special police rules and were exempt from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts.

Outside the Dāmin-i-koh, in zamīndāri areas, the Santāl was better off, for though *mahājans* had been allowed to settle freely in the villages, the old zamīndārs were at least a counterbalancing force and prevented them usurping too much power. The latter, however, were being supplanted by the hated *Dikkus* or foreigners, who ousted their Santāl tenants from the lands they had cleared. These lands had been settled with them by the original zamīndars on long leases at easy rates that they might reclaim jungle. As cultivation extended, the Bengalis and other foreigners induced the Santāls to sell some of their surplus lands. They thus gradually extended their holdings, and finally secured the best lands in the village by exacting mortgages from the improvident Santāls in return for loans. Many of the Santāls were consequently driven to commence life again by clearing fresh jungle and founding new villages, to be again ousted by their more astute and unscrupulous neighbours. Several old *ghātirāl* families and petty landholders having also got into difficulties, their estates were sold and passed into the hands of the *Dikkus*. In some cases, again, old families became indebted to Bengalis and executed usufructuary mortgages of their estates for a term of years on the understanding that the mortgagees would pay the Government revenue. The latter, however, wilfully omitted to pay the revenue, and the result was that the landlord was declared a defaulter and his estate sold, the mortgagee himself eventually becoming a *benāmi* purchaser. As long as the old proprietors remained, the Santāls were well treated, but after the advent of Bengalis and other land speculators, no consideration was shown to them. The new landlords were non-resident; they rack-rented the ryots, and the latter in despair gave up their leases and were replaced by strangers.

Another device which worked much mischief among the Santāls was the execution of bonds, by which the debtor promised to work out his debt by personal service and the payment of an exorbitant rate of interest. The Santāl thus became a *kamiyā*, i.e., the bond servant of his creditor. The effects of this system may be realized from the remarks of Mr. (later Sir) William LeFleming Robinson, I.C.S., who in 1858 secured its abolition in the Santāl Parganas. "It was called Kamiotee, but it is not peculiar to Sonthalia or the Sonthals. You will find it nearly all over the country, I believe, in one form or another. But in Sonthalia it was very bad. A man borrowed money and gave a bond to work it out, binding himself to work for the lender, whenever he was required, without pay. The lender of course required his services at harvest and the other busy seasons of the



year, when the debtor could have got work and pay elsewhere ; and when work was slack, the lender of course did not require his slave's services. He could make nothing elsewhere ; all he got when working was food, and sometimes a bit of cloth once a year. As interest was taken in advance, the debtor could never work out his debt ; the interest was never less than 25 per cent., often much more. The son, daughter or other nearest relation of the debtor used in case of his death to be considered liable, and if suits were brought against these bonds in the old Munsiff's courts, they used to give decrees for their due execution, no matter how old the debt or who was working it out at the time. I have had a bond brought to me in which Rs. 25 was originally borrowed by a man who worked his lifetime, his son did ditto, and I released his grandson from any further necessity ; it had been running on for over thirty years, if I remember rightly ! ” The discontent of the Santals under this system was accentuated by the good wages obtained by free labourers. The latter went away to work on the railway, which was then under construction, and returning with their savings were able to deck out their women in simple finery and feast their fellow villagers.

Last, but by no means least, there was another influence at work, viz., the Santals' yearning for independence and for recognition as lords of the soil—a motive which inspired them with the idea of establishing a kingdom for themselves under their own *Subahs* or chiefs.

The grievances of the Santals had for some time produced a spirit of unrest, which resulted, in 1854, in a number of *mahājans'* houses being attacked at night. These outrages were treated as ordinary dacoities, and their perpetrators were caught, tried and convicted, protesting bitterly that their oppressors were not even rebuked. In January 1855 two gang robberies were committed by Santals, but Government ordered the release of the convicted robbers, as it appeared that the crime was due to the oppression of usurers. It seems probable that this act of clemency was regarded by the Santals as a confession of weakness. However that may be, in July 1855 a revolt broke out among the Santals, who found leaders in four brothers named Sidu, Khanu, Ohandu and Bhairab, inhabitants of the village of Bhagnadihi, a short distance south of Burhait, which had suffered much from the Hindu usurers. All four were landless men, and Sidu and Khanu, who were the leading spirits, had long been brooding over their real or imaginary wrongs. They now gave out that they had witnessed a divine apparition and been charged with a divine message. The story ran that a Thakur or god appeared to them

in the form of a white man, dressed like a native, with ten fingers on each hand. He wrote in a book, which he gave the brothers, together with 20 pieces of paper in five batches. He then ascended upwards and disappeared, after which two men appeared, each with six fingers on each hand, and having told them the purport of the Thākur's order, likewise vanished. For some time the god appeared to the two brothers every day: at one time as a flame of fire, with a book, some white paper and a knife; at another in the form of a solid cart wheel. A shrine was erected consisting of a mound of mud crowned by a cart wheel, at which the villagers were instructed to present offerings of grain and milk, and to sacrifice kids and buffaloes. Here the worshippers were shown the slips of paper and the book (which proved to be none other than the Gospel according to St. John), and were told that in them were written the orders of the god. The news of the miracle spread far and wide, and messengers were sent to all the *mānjhis* of the Dāmin-i-koh, bearing a branch of the *sāl* tree, which, like the fiery cross of the Highlands, was a signal to the people to gather together.

On the appointed day, the 30th June 1855, at full moon, 10,000 Santāls are said to have met at Bhagnadihi, where the Thākur's orders to them were announced. Letters are said to have been written addressed to Government, to the authorities at Bhāgalpur and Bīrbhūm, to some police *dārogās*, zamīndārs and others, informing them of these orders. The Santāls, it is said, disclaimed any intentions of opposing the Government, and declared that their new god had directed them to collect and pay revenue to the State, at the rate of two annas on every buffalo-plough, one anna on each bullock-plough, and half-an-anna on each cow-plough per annum. The rate of interest upon loans was to be one pice in the rupee yearly. The Santāls were further enjoined to slaughter at once all the *mahājans* and *dārogās*, to banish the traders and zamīndārs and all rich Bengālis from their country, to sever their connection with the Dāmin-i-koh, and to fight all who resisted them, for the bullets of their enemies would be turned to water. Whatever may be the truth of this story, there is no trace of any letters containing this proclamation having been received by the authorities. It appears, however, that Khanu and Sidu proclaimed themselves lords of the country under the title of *Sabāhs*, and appointed *naibs*, *dārogās* and other subordinate officers.

The *dārogā* of Dighi or Burio Bazar having heard of the gathering, set out with a following of *barkandāzes* to arrest the four brothers, instigated, it is said, by some Hindu money-lenders, who feared for themselves and bribed him to bring a false charge of

dacoity against them. When he met the Santāls assembled at Pachkutīā, a little north of Barhait, they refused to disperse, and directed him to levy a tax of Rs. 5 on every Bengali family in the neighbourhood. Then, on his angrily ordering the arrest of the brothers, they fell on him with their battle-axes and cut off his head. After this murder, the Santāls set out on the war trail. The Collector of Bhāgalpur and Mr. Pontet were at the time at Rājmahāl, where they took shelter in the old Sangidalān or palace of Shāh Shujā, then the house of the Railway Engineer, Mr. Vigors. This was barricaded and fortified, and they and the railway officials held it against the attacks of the rebels until troops arrived. When the news of the outbreak reached Bhāgalpur, the Hill Rangers were called out and advanced to Piālapur, but they were beaten off the field by the Santāls, in spite of the latter being armed only with bows and arrows. The Santāls were left masters of the country and ravaged it from Colgong on the west to Rājmahāl on the east, and nearly as far as Rāniganj and Sainthiā on the south.

The first move against them was made by a detachment of 400 men of the 7th Native Infantry, which, on the 11th July, advanced from Berhampore under Mr. Toogood, the Magistrate of Murshidābād. The rebels had marched eastward and after killing a *sazāwal* known as Khān Sāhib, had fired the house of the Raja of Ambar at Kadamsair, a few miles south of Pākaur. They next attacked an indigo factory at the same place, but were held in check by the planter, Mr. C. Maseyk, who, with two companions armed with fowling pieces, fired at them from a boat in the middle of a nullah. News of the attack was sent to his brother at Dullīān, and the civil authorities sent up 160 police, who forced the rebels to retreat. Unable to effect their purpose, the Santāls moved on, destroying some railway works and sacking Pākaur, and then fell on Palsā in Bīrbhūm. The troops arrived at Kadamsair shortly after the Santāls had left, and pursued them to Palsā, too late, however, to save it from being sacked. They marched on the same night to Maheshpur, where they signally defeated the rebels next morning (July 15th); Sidu, Khanu and Bhairab were wounded, though not mortally, and 200 other Santāls killed and wounded. Chandu and Khanu met another reverse at Raghunāthpur not long afterwards; and at Maheshpur, which was garrisoned by a detachment of the 7th Native Infantry, the Santāls failed in an attack on the Rāja's house, which they wanted as a residence for their *Sūbah*. A few days later the troops, after overcoming a faint resistance, forced the passes in the hills, and on the 24th July took Burhait, the Santāl capital; while

Sidu was treacherously handed over to the Bhāgalpur troops by some of his followers.

Towards the end of July all the troops available had been mobilized and placed under the command of Brigadier-General Lloyd, who had already acquired some fame as the founder of Darjeeling, and subsequently tarnished his reputation by his failure to suppress the mutiny at Dinapore in 1857. Colonel Bird was shortly afterwards appointed to the special command of the troops employed in the Bānkurā and Birbhūm districts. General Lloyd was not, however, given full and independent authority; for though he was at first informed that Government placed the conduct of the operations entirely in his hands, an order issued on the 30th July stated that "it was not intended that the military should act independently of the civil power, but that only the nature of the military operations should be entirely in the hands of the military commanders." There were consequently misunderstandings between the civil and military officers, and the Governor of India also refused to permit the Lieutenant-Governor to proclaim martial law. Within a month, however, the country to the north, towards Bhāgalpur, had been cleared and the insurgents driven southwards, and in the south quiet had been restored to some parts. But there were still 30,000 men in arms, and after each reverse they took refuge in the jungle, from which it was difficult to expel them during the rains.

The local Government now issued a proclamation offering a free pardon to all who would come in and submit within ten days, except ring-leaders and persons proved to have committed murder. The offer was treated as a confession of weakness, and in September the rebels showed renewed activity. By the end of that month the whole country from Deoghar to the south-western border of the district was in their hands. In one direction an army of Santāls moved through the district three thousand strong, and in another their number amounted to seven thousand. The beginning of cold weather, however, enabled the troops to take the field with greater effect, and on the 10th of November martial law was proclaimed, *i.e.*, it was directed that any one taken in arms in open hostility to Government, or opposing its authority by force of arms, or committing any overt act of rebellion, should be tried by Court Martial and, if convicted, immediately executed. A large force now swept through the country, to which little resistance was offered by the Santāls, who, unable to break through the cordon of troops, in some places 12,000 to 14,000 strong, were weakened by hunger and disease.

The combined effect of the proclamation and of the activity of the troops was soon apparent. Driven out of the open country, the Santāls were forced back to the jungles, and a number of their leaders were captured, including Khanu, who was taken prisoner near Uparbānda, north-east of Jāmtārā, by the *sardār ghātwaī* of Kunjrā. Eventually, on the 3rd January 1856, quiet had been so far restored, that the Government of India were able to suspend the further operation of martial law. There were a few outbreaks after this, but the rebels were thoroughly broken and cowed; and by the end of the cold weather the rising was at an end.

The rebellion was marked throughout by scenes of inhuman cruelty, *e.g.*, slow roasting of men, torture of children, the ripping up of women, the drinking of blood, etc. Villages were burnt, property pillaged, and the country devastated. The most brutal outrages were committed on the Bengalis, whom the Santāls regarded as their real enemies. When a *malājan* fell into their hands, they first cut off his feet with their *pharsas* or battle-axes with the taunt that that was 4 annas in the rupee, then cut off his legs at the thigh to make up 8 annas, then cut him in two at his waist to make up 12 annas, and finally took off his head to complete the 16 annas, shouting "*Pharkati*," *ie*, a full quittance. A similar savage sense of humour was displayed by them in chopping up the body of a zamīndār into 22 pieces, one for each of his ancestors. They themselves declared that they warred against the Bengalis and not against the English, and there is a story that they sent *paruānas* informing some indigo planters that as they were cultivators like themselves, they would not be molested, if they stayed in their factories and supplied them with *rasad*. Unfortunately for these claims, there are authentic cases of their murdering defenceless Europeans as well as burning down their bungalows and destroying railway works. In one case two unfortunate European ladies were cut down when trying to escape, and in another an old planter and his three sons were murdered near Teliāgarhi, when they tried to defend a village against one of the Santāl bands. The natives all fled, and the elephant carrying the father and one young man ran into a *ghil*; the Santāls then scaled up its side and spilt open their heads, while the other two sons fell pierced by arrows.

At the same time the Santāls showed a certain chivalry in the struggle against the troops. Although it was their custom to use poisoned arrows in shooting and hunting, they did not use them against the soldiers. There is, at least, one instance of their giving fair warning before making an attack, for having captured a *dak* runner and looted his mail bags, they spared his life on

condition that he went to Suri carrying a branch of the *sal* tree with three leaves on it, to show that in three days they would attack the town. They also showed the most reckless courage. In one case 45 Santāls had taken refuge in a mud house and refused to surrender. Volley and volley was fired in, and at every volley quarter was offered; but each time the Santāls answered with a discharge of arrows. At last, when their fire slackened, the troops entered the huts and found only one old man alive. A sepoy called on him to lay down his arms, whereupon the old man rushed on the sepoy and cut him down with his battle-axe. The general character of the struggle has been vividly described by Major Jervis, who commanded some of the troops. "It was not war; they did not understand yielding. As long as their national drum beat, the whole party would stand, and allow themselves to be shot down. Their arrows often killed our men, and so we had to fire on them as long as they stood. When their drum ceased, they would move off for a quarter of a mile; then their drums began again, and they calmly stood till we came up and poured a few volleys into them. There was not a sepoy in the war who did not feel ashamed of himself." The conduct of the Pahārias was very dissimilar. They followed the Santāl bands at a respectable distance, and waited until the latter had driven away the peaceful inhabitants of the villages. Then they rushed in, and taking advantage of their absence and of the Santāls pursuing, seized everything they could lay hands on and speedily retired, leaving to the Santāls all the fighting and but little of the plunder.\*

The Government and the public alike had been taken by surprise by the rebellion, and while it raged, the most drastic measures for pacifying the Santāls were proposed. It was remarked, for instance, by a writer in *The Friend of India*:—"It is only by striking terror into these blood-thirsty savages, who have respected neither age nor sex, that we can hope to quell this insurrection. It is necessary to avenge the outrages committed, and to protect the cultivators of the plains from a repetition of them. The Santāls believe that they can enjoy the luxury of blood and plunder for a month without a certainty of retribution. It is absolutely necessary that this impression should be removed or obliterated, if Government would not in these districts sit on bayonet points. To achieve this end, the retribution must be

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\* This account of the rebellion has been compiled from *The Santāl Rebellion*, Calcutta Review, 1856; *The Santāl Pergunnahs*, Calcutta Review, 1860; *Santāls and the Santāls*, by E. G. Man, 1867 and *The Annals of Rural Bengal*, by Sir W. W. Hunter.

complete, leaving no calculation of chances for future rioters; striking, that none may fail to know and understand; and tremendous, that people may know their lives and happiness are not held of light account. It is to Pegu that we would convey the Santals, not one or two of their ringleaders, but the entire population of the infected districts." After the close of the rebellion milder counsels prevailed. A special enquiry was made, and it was recognized that the Santals had genuine grievances.

It was decided that a special system of administration should be introduced, and Act XXXVII of 1855 was passed, which removed from the operation of the general laws and regulations "the district called the Dāmin-i-koh and other districts which are inhabited chiefly by the uncivilized race of people called Sonthals." This area was separated from the districts of Bhāgalpur and Birbhūm and formed into four sub-districts, viz., Dumka, Deoghar, (including Jāmtārā), Goddā and Rājmaḥāl, (including Pakaur), which were known collectively as the Santal Parganas. These sub-districts were placed under a Deputy Commissioner and four Assistant Commissioners, who were given jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases. The regular police were abolished, and the duty of keeping the peace and arresting criminals was vested in the villagers themselves, the headman of each village being held directly responsible. A non-regulation system was introduced, the main feature of which was direct communication between the people and their rulers. The three chief principles were:—(1) to have no intermediary between the Santāl and the Assistant Commissioner; (2) to have complaints made verbally without a written petition or the presence of *amlā*; (3) to have all criminal work carried on with the help of the Santāls themselves, who were to bring in the accused, with the witnesses, to the courts. So successfully was this system worked under the first Deputy Commissioner Mr. (afterwards Sir) Ashley Eden and the Commissioner Mr. George Yule, C.B., that during the Mutiny of 1857 not only did the Santāls take no part in the disturbances, but it was found possible to enlist a number of them to serve as police.

THE  
SEPOY  
MUTINY.

When the Mutiny broke out, Rohini was the head-quarters of the 5th Irregular Cavalry, and there were three officers of that regiment stationed there, viz., the Commandant Major Macdonald, the Adjutant Sir Norman Leslie, and Dr. Grant. On the 8th June, just a month after the outbreak at Meerut, these three officers were attacked, as they were sitting at tea outside Major Macdonald's bungalow, three men suddenly rushing on them with drawn swords. Sir Norman Leslie turned to enter the house

to get his sword, but, his foot slipping, he was cut down at once. The other two seized the chairs on which they had been sitting, and with them endeavoured to defend themselves. Both were wounded and would have been killed had it not been that their assailants suddenly lost heart and fled. The men of the regiment were called together and their swords inspected, but all were found perfectly clean. The men of the regiment had till then behaved well, and from the fact that the murderers had worn *dhotis*, it was thought that they were disbanded sepoys, many of whom, had been seen in the neighbourhood. It was soon ascertained, however, through the agency of the Urdu Major Imam Khān that they belonged to the regiment. They were seized, brought to a drum-head court martial, and sentenced to be hanged. Major Macdonald, in spite of the fact that his head had been cut open, and that a rising of the sepoys might at once follow, was equal to the occasion.

To quote his own account—"One of the prisoners was of a very high caste and influence, and this man I determined to treat with the greatest ignominy by getting a low caste man to hang him. To tell the truth, I never for a moment expected to leave the hanging scene alive, but I determined to do my duty, and well knew the effect that pluck and decision had on the natives. The regiment was drawn out: wounded cruelly as I was, I had to see everything done myself, even to the adjusting of the ropes, and saw them looped to run easy. Two of the culprits were paralyzed with fear and astonishment, never dreaming that I should dare to hang them without an order from Government. The third said that he would not be hanged, and called on the Prophet and on his comrades to rescue him. This was an awful moment; an instant's hesitation on my part, and probably I should have had a dozen balls through me: so I seized a pistol, clapped it to the man's ear, and said with a look there was no mistake about—"Another word out of your mouth, and your brains shall be scattered on the ground." He trembled and held his tongue. The elephant came up, he was put on his back, the rope adjusted, the elephant moved, and he was left dangling. I then had the others up and off in the same way. And after some time, when I dismissed the men of the regiment to their lines, and still found my head on my shoulders, I really could scarcely believe it."

Subsequent events proved that there was at that time an organized conspiracy in the regiment that many knew of the plot to assassinate their three officers and only waited its fulfilment to rise *en masse*. The prompt action and bold front of Major Macdonald had, however, such an effect on the regiment,



that it remained quiet till the middle of August, when the 5th Irregulars at Bhāgalpur mutinied and marched on to Rohini. There they were joined by their comrades of the regiment, and after having extorted Rs. 12,000 from the people of the place, the whole body marched off to Bausi, the head-quarters of the 32nd Native Infantry. The mutineers hoped that the latter would join them; but they had been forestalled, for a messenger, at the risk of his life, brought news of the mutiny to the Commandant Colonel Burney, arriving just half an hour before the troopers. The authorities at Deoghar were similarly warned by another messenger, who walked 80 miles in 30 hours. Dumkā itself, at which there was a troop of the 5th Irregulars, was saved by the forethought of Babu Syāmalāl Nand Mukherji, who had the treasure and prisoners sent off to Suri. The *sowārs* after these failures proceeded westward by rapid marches.

After this nothing worthy of record occurred till the 9th October, when a detachment of the 32nd Native Infantry at Deoghar suddenly broke out into mutiny, murdered their commanding officer, Lieutenant Cooper, and Mr. Roland, the Assistant Commissioner, and having plundered the bazar, marched off to Rohini, and thence to the west, following the same route as that taken by the 5th Irregulars. "Some of the circumstances attending this outbreak," wrote the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Frederick Halliday, "are worth recording as illustrating the unaccountable conduct which has on many occasions been displayed by the sepoys during the outbreak. Lieutenants Cooper and Rannie and Mr. Roland, the Assistant Commissioner, were all surprised in the same bungalow, which the sepoys completely surrounded. Lieutenant Cooper was an officer who implicitly trusted his men, was constantly with them in familiar intercourse, and appeared to be an object of sincere attachment. Mr. Roland was an utter stranger to them: whilst Lieutenant Rannie, though of course well known to the men, took no particular pains to please them. Yet him they specially spared, calling out to him by name to come out of the bungalow and allowing him to leave the place unmolested, whilst they ruthlessly murdered their friend Lieutenant Cooper and the stranger Mr. Roland, of whom they could know nothing bad or good."

SUBSE-  
QUENT  
HISTORY.

The subsequent history of the district is almost entirely administrative and is associated with the names of successive Deputy Commissioners. Mr. Ashley Eden, who drew up the police rules known as Yule's Rules after the Commissioner, was succeeded in 1856 by Mr. (afterwards Sir Rivers) Thomson, and the latter by Sir William Robinson, who held office from 1858.

to 1860, and in these few years succeeded in carrying through a number of reforms, including the abolition of the *kamiyā* system already referred to. The next Deputy Commissioner was Mr. Browne Wood, who held office till 1873. During these 13 years, the district began to relapse to the Regulation system, owing to a ruling of the Advocate-General in 1863, which tied the hands of the officers, and enabled the zamindārs, while keeping within the letter of the law, to enhance rents freely, turn out village headmen at their pleasure, and replace them by strangers, who rack-rented the Santāls and drove them from the lands they had cleared. Further, the Civil Procedure Code (Act VIII of 1859) compelled the courts to decree debts and the extortionate rates of interest demanded by the *mahājans*. Effect thus ceased to be given to an order issued by Mr. Commissioner Yule, limiting the rate of interest to 25 per cent., which had proved of great benefit to the people. The readmission of professional lawyers into the courts had also tended to place the Santāls at a disadvantage in litigation with their landlords, as the latter were generally able to secure the best men to conduct their cases.

Great discontent ensued and came to a head in 1871, when there were unmistakable signs of unrest among the Santāls of the Dumkā and Goddā sub-divisions. Large parties gathered to make tumultuous appeals to British officers or collected in the jungles in great hunting parties, giving out that they intended going in a body to Dumkā and other headquarters, and perhaps even to Bhāgalpur, to obtain redress of their grievances. Their excitement naturally alarmed the Bengali inhabitants of the district, who still retained a vivid recollection of the atrocities committed on them during the rebellion of 1855. In the Dumkā bazar prices fell 50 per cent. in a few days, and a general stampede seemed imminent. The state of panic among the Bengali population may be gathered from an incident which occurred in *pargana* Sultānābād. A tiger having killed a bullock in the village of Hāthimārā, close to Maheshpur, the Santāls turned out and beat their kettle-drums to scare away the animal. The sound of the kettle-drums, which was the usual summons to an armed gathering in 1855, was believed by the Bengalis to be the first signal for an outbreak, and 500 or 600 of them fled, with their families, cattle and goods, to the Murarai station of the East Indian Railway, declaring that the Santāls had risen and were following them with the object of looting the country. The Railway District Engineer stationed at Rāmpur Hāt thereupon proceeded with a body of volunteers to Murarai to meet an

enemy who never came, and soon discovered the groundlessness of the panic. The Deputy Commissioner also reassured the fugitives, and Mahārājā Gopāl Singh of Maheshpur took measures to allay the fears of the people, so that in two or three days the alarm subsided.

An enquiry was instituted, and it was shown that the Santāls had real grievances. There had been extensive rack-renting, ejectment of village headmen, seizure of rent-free lands of village priests and others, breaking up of the village community system so much cherished by the Santāls, and other acts of oppression by zamindārs. The then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir George Campbell, considered that it would be almost impossible to define by an exact law the rights to which the people had an equitable claim, and that the only satisfactory course would be to put the whole matter in the hands of an able and judicious officer, acting on general principles laid down for his guidance. It was decided therefore that a rough settlement of the Santāl Parganas should be carried out by a Settlement Officer untrammelled by detailed laws, who would record the rights of all parties as determined by himself.

This object was secured by the enactment of Regulation III of 1872 "for the peace and good government of the Santāl Parganas." That Regulation gave the Lieutenant-Governor full power to appoint officers to make a settlement of landed rights, to restore dispossessed headmen and others, to settle rents, and to record the customs and usages of the people. It also introduced a usury law limiting the accumulation of interest on debts, and it laid down what laws were to be in force and what left to the discretion of Government to introduce or withdraw from time to time. Under the provisions of this Regulation, Mr. Browne Wood, who was appointed Settlement Officer, made a settlement of the whole district between the years 1873 and 1879, defining and recording the rights and duties of landlords and tenants, and, where necessary, fixing fair rents. One of the results of this settlement was to preserve the Santāl village community system, under which the village community, as a whole, holds the village lands and has collective rights over the village waste. These rights, which have not been able to survive elsewhere in Bengal, were recorded and saved from encroachment. The settlement also established on a firm footing the status of the headman, and restrained the zamindārs from interfering with the management and internal economy of the villages.

The subsequent history of the district has been uneventful. In 1874-75 there was a certain amount of unrest arising partly

from the excitement attending the settlement operations and partly from the Kharwār movement. Disaffection manifested itself by a spirit of resistance to the payment of rent and by attempts to form a kind of political organization. Two ringleaders, named Bhagirath Mānji and Gyān Parganait, were imprisoned, and as a further precautionary measure, additional police were sent to the district and a wing of the 4th Native Infantry from Bhāgalpur was stationed at Dumkā. In 1880-81 there was a revival of the Kharwār movement, which gave much trouble during the preparations for the census, interested agitators seizing the opportunity for a tribal administration. The Subdivisional Officer of Dumkā was besieged in his tent by a howling mob for a whole night, the subdivisional bungalow at Jāmtārā was burnt down, and Mr. Cosserat, the officer in charge of the census of the Dāmin-i-koh, was surprised and taken prisoner at Katikund. Objection was taken to the numbering of houses and of the people, and to the record of their names, while the fact that the final enumeration was to be carried out at night lent colour to representations that Government meditated some widespread policy of violence. It was, therefore, thought necessary to dispense with the final nocturnal enumeration; and in order to overawe the Santāls, a body of military police was posted in the district and a field force of 4,500 cavalry and infantry was sent up under Colonel (now General Sir Thomas) Gordon. Troops were marched through the district, and these measures proved effectual in preventing any further disturbance.

In conclusion, mention may be made of the officers to whom the administration of the district has been entrusted whether as Deputy Commissioners or Settlement Officers, and who are therefore distinguished by the name of Santāl officers. The first Deputy Commissioner was Sir Ashley Eden, who was succeeded in February 1856 by Sir Rivers Thomson, who held charge during the Mutiny. From 1858 to 1860 the Deputy Commissioner was Sir William Le Fleming Robinson, whose administration has been described as follows:—"No local officer carried out such sweeping reforms, and so well were they established, that it is hard to realize now the state of things which preceded them. His efforts were chiefly directed against the different forms of servitude by debtors, which was so prevalent and easy to enforce; but he attacked every system by which the powerful, the more instructed, or the cunning could get the better of the poor and ignorant."\* He was succeeded in 1860 by one of the uncovenanted Assistants,

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W. B. Oldham, Introduction to Reprint of the Laws of the Santāl Parganas, 1889.

Mr Browne Wood, who held office as Deputy Commissioner for 19½ years. In 1873 he was selected by Sir George Campbell to carry out the first settlement of the district, a task which, it was held, could only be performed by 'an able and judicious officer.' Mr. Browne Wood amply justified his selection, and ably discharged the duties entrusted to him for six years (1873-79). To his settlement the Santals are indebted for fixity of rents, stability of tenure and the preservation of their village community system. During these six years Mr. John Boxwell officiated as Deputy Commissioner. "Probably no other officer so well adapted for carrying out Sir George Campbell's view could have been selected. Not only did he thoroughly grasp and appreciate them, but he brought to their fulfilment both qualities and attainments of a high order. To the people he was a veritable *Avatār*, and he set himself to study and master the Santal tongue."\*

The next Deputy Commissioner was Mr W. B. Oldham, C.I.E., who held office for 5 years; and he was succeeded, after a brief interval, by Mr. R. Carstairs, who held office, with short intervals of leave, for 13 years. "All these officers," writes Mr. McPherson, "were loyal interpreters of the principles of administration which found expression in Act XXXVII of 1855 and Regulation III of 1872. If Mr. Wood and Mr. Boxwell were the makers of the settlement and the Santal system, Mr. Oldham and Mr. Carstairs may well be styled the "guardians" of the same. Mr Oldham had Mr. G. N. Barlow for his Commissioner throughout his incumbency, but in Mr. Carstairs' time there were frequent changes in the Commissionership and all holders of the office were not permeated with an equal amount of sympathy for the non-regulation system. Mr. Carstairs had to do many a battle for the principles on which the administration of his district was founded." Mr. John Craven conducted the first revision settlements for six years (1888—94) under the guidance of Mr Carstairs. With the more recent operations conducted for the last 10 years by Mr. H. McPherson and Mr. H. L. L. Allanson, the Deputy Commissioner most closely associated was Mr. C. H. Rompes. During his tenure of office many important questions connected with the administration of the district and of the Dāmin-i-koh were passed in review, the discussions raised by the settlement operations resulting in three important amendments of the Santal Parganas Settlement and Rent Regulations, viz., Regulations II of 1904, III of 1907, and III of 1908.

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\* W. B. Oldham, Introduction to Reprint of the Laws of the Santal Parganas, 1889.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE PEOPLE.

STATISTICS of the population as recorded at each census are given in the margin, from which it will be seen GROWTH  
OF POPU-  
LATION.

1872	... 1,259,185	that the number of inhabitants has increased
1881	... 1,567,966	by nearly 50 per cent. in 30 years. Some
1891	... 1,753,775	of the increase, however, is due to improved
1901	... 1,809,737	enumeration, the census of 1872 and of

1881 having been attended by considerable difficulties. In 1872 a number of wild rumours were afloat in the Dāmin portion of the Goddā subdivision, *e.g.*, that people were to be taken from each village and deported to clear jungle in Assam and the Duārs, that they were being counted in order to convert them to Christianity by force, etc. The ryots of Boārijor drove the *parganait*, and the *mānjhis* who were assisting him, out of their villages, and refused to allow the census to proceed. When the Extra Assistant Commissioner arrived on the spot, he found about 1,500 people assembled, in real terror of the evils which would come upon them if they were counted, the men declaring that they were helpless as the bare mention of a census was enough to make their women and children frantic. It seems, however, that they never had any intention of offering a serious resistance to the census, for when it was explained that the *parganait* had only been acting under the orders of Government, the crowd readily dispersed, with the remark that the *sarkār* might do what it pleased, but they would rather not be counted. Elsewhere the census passed off quietly, but primitive methods had to be employed for enumerating the people in parts of the Dāmin-i koh owing to the ignorance of the people and the fear of alarming an easily excitable population. The Santāls have no written language of their own, and there were comparatively very few of them who can write Hindi or Bengali. Recourse was had therefore to their own national method of counting, *vis.*, by tying knots on a number of strings, which were coloured differently, so as to distinguish males from females and children from adults.

In the Dāmin portion of the Rājmahāl subdivision such coloured strings were distributed through the *parganais* or heads of communes to the *mānjhis* or village headmen of the Santāls, and through the Pahāria *sardārs* to their *naibs* and *mānjhis*. These strings were of four colours—black for male adults, red for female adults, white for boys, and yellow for girls. The people were counted by the *mānjhis*, and their numbers recorded by tying a knot for each person on the string representing the proper sex and age. Within the portion of the Dāmin-koh attached to the Goddā subdivision, the Santāls and Pahārias were similarly enumerated by means of knotting different coloured strings representing the males, females, and children separately. In some villages three people were told off to keep the reckoning, which was done by so many seeds or small pieces of gravel, one person keeping a reckoning of the men, another of the women and a third of the children. This enumeration is known to have been incomplete, and in 1881 there were outbreaks which vitiated the results, the final nocturnal enumeration being omitted. The first reliable census was that of 1891, but even in that year the enumeration was the occasion of wild rumours in the Rājmahāl subdivision, *e.g.*, it was stated that Government was numbering the people to enable it to send them as coolies to Assam, that enhanced rents were to be levied, and that all Santāls except the Kharwārs were to be made Christians.

CENSUS  
OF 1901.

The census of 1901 showed a net increase of 55,962 persons or 3·2 per cent.—a surprisingly small rate of growth for a healthy district with a prolific population. This result was attributed to the large scale on which emigration has taken place: it was, in fact, estimated that about 182,000 persons left the district during the previous 10 years, and that but for this the increase of the population would have been at least 10 per cent. The following table gives the salient statistics of the census:—

Subdivision.	Area in square miles.	Number of—		Population.	Population per square mile.	Percentage of variation in population between 1891 and 1901.
		Towns	Villages.			
Deoghar	952	2	2,368	297,403	312	+4·7
Goddā	967	..	1,274	390,323	404	+1·4
Pākaur	683	..	1,055	238,643	349	+3·6
Rājmahāl ...	741	1	1,292	276,703	373	+0·1
Dumkā ...	1,429	.	2,105	416,861	292	+8·1
Jāmtārā ...	698	.	1,073	189,799	272	+9·2
District Total	5,470	3	9,167	1,809,737	331	+3·2

The density of population, *viz.*, 331 per square mile, is less Density. than in any other district of the Bhāgalpur Division. On the north-east and north-west, in thānas Mahāgamā, Goddā and Pakaur, where there is a considerable area of low fertile country, the soil supports a fairly dense population; but the Dāmin-i-koh, which accounts for a quarter of the whole district, is very sparsely inhabited. In the south the density of population rises, for the soil is more fertile than in the hilly tract in the centre of the district, and there are still extensive areas under forest, which is being cleared away and brought under the plough.

The most striking features of migration in the Santāl Migration. Parganas are firstly, its great volume, and secondly, the strong tendency of the people to move eastwards. There is a strong influx from all the adjoining districts west of a line drawn approximately north and south through the centre of the district (from Sahibganj to Jamtara), *i.e.*, from Bhāgalpur, Monghyr, Hazāribāgh and Manbhūm, and a still stronger ebb in the direction of all districts east of this line, *viz.*, Purnea, Malda, Murshidābād, Bīrbhūm and Burdwān. According to the census of 1901, the immigrants from the west exceeded 83,000, while the emigrants to the east numbered close on 117,000. The great migration of the Santals to this district from the south and west took place during the middle part of the 19th century, and many of the persons shown as immigrants at the last census are probably the survivors of those who took part in this movement. The tribe is still spreading east and north, and the full effect of the movement is not exhausted in the districts that adjoin the Santāl Parganas, but makes itself felt even further away in those parts of Dinājpur, Rajshāhi and Bogrā which share with Mālda the elevated tract of quasi-laterite known as the Barind. Dinājpur alone contains more than 48,000 persons born in the Santāl Parganas, and Rajshahi and Bogrā more than 8,000. Of emigration to more distant places the most noticeable feature is the exodus to the Assam tea gardens, where more than 31,000 natives of this district were enumerated in 1901, and to Jalpai-guri, where they numbered more than 10,000.

Hitherto the Santals, in the course of their migration, have avoided alluvial soil in a curious manner, but this may be only fortuitous and due to the fact that hitherto the more broken high country, being sparsely inhabited, has attracted them as giving ample room for expansion combined with a minimum of outside interference. It has also been suggested that their movements have depended on the existence of *sal* forests and the absence of



restrictions on cutting it down, the *sāl* tree being to the Santāls what the bamboo is to the Bengali.\*

The chief reason for their emigration from the district appears to be that they are an extremely prolific race, and that the culturable portion of the jungles in the Santāl Parganas is becoming exhausted. There is therefore not sufficient scope for reclamation, and also the rate of reclamation does not keep pace with the rate of growth of population.

Among non-Santāl immigrants may be mentioned Mārwaris, Bhojpuris and traders from other parts of Bihār, who have come and settled in the district with their wives and children. The Mārwaris congregate in the towns and do a wholesale business; the profession of the others is money-lending and shop-keeping. In fact, they own almost all the shops in the district, the Bengalis having only a few and the Santals and Pahārias practically none.

Towns and  
villages.

Three places were treated as towns at the census of 1901, *viz.*, Madhupur with a population of 6,840, Deoghar (8,838) and Sahibganj (7,558). Deoghar and Sahibganj have long been municipalities, and in 1903 a third municipality was created at Dumkā. Madhupur is rising in importance, its climate, scenery and situation on the railway line having attracted well-to-do residents of Calcutta and Government pensioners. Deoghar is popular for the same reason, but its population, according to the census, is practically stationary, having been 8,667 and 8,005 at the two preceding enumerations. There is, however, a large floating population of pilgrims, which vitiates the statistics; and in 1901 there were probably fewer pilgrims owing to the prevalence of plague in India. Sahibganj is an important mart at the spot where the East Indian Railway Loop Line touches the Ganges. In 1891 it had a population of 11,297, and the low figure recorded at the last census is attributed to the fact that an outbreak of plague had led to the partial evacuation of the town. The rural population for the most part live in small villages, 67 per cent. being found in villages with less than 500 inhabitants, and 27 per cent. in villages with a population of 500 to 2,000.

Occupations.

Agriculture supports 81 per cent. of the population, industries 7 per cent., commerce 0.6 per cent., and the professions 0.8 per cent. Of the agricultural population 44 per cent. are actual workers, and these include 1,300 rent-receivers, 603,000 rent-payers and 42,000 labourers. Of the industrial population, 51 per cent. are actual workers, and these include 5,000 cotton

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\* E. A. Gait, Bengal Census Report of 1901, p. 139.

weavers, 12,000 potters and 6,000 basket and mat makers. Of the professional classes 39 per cent. are actual workers, including 1,000 priests and the same number of musicians. Among those engaged in other occupations are 25,000 herdsmen and 68,000 general labourers.

The district is a polyglot one, for aborigines live more or less <sup>LAN-</sup> side by side with speakers of Aryan languages, and in some <sup>GUAGES.</sup> parts as many as four languages are spoken by different communities.

The main language is Santālī, which is spoken by 649,000 Santālī persons. It is a language belonging to the Mundā family, and is remarkably uniform, having been only slightly influenced by the Aryan languages. This influence is mainly confined to the vocabulary, and broadly speaking the structure and general character of the language have remained unchanged. Santālī does not possess a written literature, though traditional legends are current among the people. It has been reduced to writing by European missionaries, and the Roman character is commonly used in writing it. There are two Santālī translations of the New Testament, and the Old Testament has lately been translated by the Revd. P. Bodding. A grammar by the Revd. L. O. Skrefsrud, published in 1873, is the leading authority on the language.\*

The general character of the language may be gathered from a sketch given by Mr. J. M. Macphail in *Santalalā*:—"Their language is the most remarkable possession that this people, exceptionally poor in this world's goods, can boast of. It is a triumph of complexity, with moods and tenses all its own, a language which is only to be learned by living among the people who speak it, but which, once learned, is peculiarly expressive and convenient. It is of the agglutinative or compounding class of languages, consisting of roots rather than words, the root serving as substantive or verb, adjective or adverb, according to the necessities of the case. It is very rich in terms for all natural objects and for all things which touch the common life of the people. There are, for instance, more than half-a-dozen verbs in Santālī for our verb "to fall." There is one which means to fall from a standing position, another to fall from a height, another to fall forwards, another to fall backwards, etc. Then there are an equal number of names for rice, according to the various forms in which it is found—seedlings, in the ear, husked rice, boiled rice, etc." But to express spiritual

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\* G. A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IV, pp 30-36.

and ethical ideas and to denote the imports of recent civilization—schools, books, paper, ink, pens, pencils, pins, church, roads (except footpaths), bridges, slate, post, magistrate, taxes, police, etc., words have to be borrowed mainly from Hindi or Hindustani.”

There are only two dialects, and even these do not differ much from the standard form of speech. The first is Kārmāli, spoken by a caste of iron smelters in the south of the district, who call themselves Har or men, but are called Kalhas by the Santāls and Kols by Hindus. The second is Māhle or Māhili, spoken by the Māhili caste in the centre and south of the district, which is closely related to Kārmāli. Among themselves the Māhilis use, to some extent, a kind of slang or secret language, substituting peculiar words and expressions for common ones, e.g., *pitis* instead of *paisā* and *lekā* instead of *ānā*. According to the census of 1901, 8,117 persons in this district speak Kārmāli, and 8,643 persons speak Māhili.\*

Bihāri.

Bihāri is returned as the language of 13·5 per cent. of the population, the dialect in common use being Maithili. The Maithili spoken in this district is influenced more or less by the Magahī spoken in the west and partly also by Bengali. The result is a well marked dialect called the Chhikā-Chhiki Boli, owing to the frequency with which the word *chhikāi* meaning “he is” and its congeners are used. The Rājmahāl Hills separate the speakers of this dialect from those who speak Bengali, but in the Deoghar subdivision there is a small tract, south and east of the town of Deoghar, where the two vernaculars overlap without combining, Maithili being spoken by people from Bihār and Bengali by those of Bengal.†

Bengali.

Bengali is the language of 13·5 per cent. of the population and is common in the east of the district. There are two varieties in use, viz., Rārhi Boli or the classical Western Bengali, and a broken dialect, called Mālpahāria, which is spoken by the Māl Pahārias.

Malto.

Malto is almost exclusively spoken by the Maler or Male Pahārias in the south of the Rājmahāl Hills, from which fact the language is also known as Rājmahāli. It is a Dravidian language, appearing to have a close resemblance to the Kurukh language spoken by Oraons. It is, however, influenced by Aryan tongues, especially in its vocabulary, and there are also traces of the influence of Santāli. It does not possess a literature of its own, but the Psalms, the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles

\* G. A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IV, pp. 70, 74.

† *Ib.* *ib.* Vol. V, Part II, pp. 13, 95, 104.

have been translated into it, the Roman alphabet being made use of for the purpose. The chief source of information about this language is a grammar published by Revd. E. Droese in 1884. According to the census of 1901, the number of persons speaking the language in the Santāl Parganas was 59,476, besides about 1,000 in other districts, whereas the Maler tribe in this district was returned as having a strength of 47,066. The explanation of this discrepancy is probably either that Rajmahāli, which was classed as Malto, should have been treated in many cases as Bengali, or that the returns for the Muler tribe were incorrect.\*

Hindus number 1,015,753 persons or 56·1 per cent. of the RELI. population, Animists 632,068 persons or 34·9 per cent., Muham- GIONS. madans 151,993 or 8·4 per cent., while the number of Christians is 9,875 and of all others 48. The bulk of the Animists are Santāls, barely one-tenth of whom were returned as Hindus at the census of 1901. Not too much reliance, however, can be placed upon the figures, as the difficulty of distinguishing between Hindus and Animists in the case of aboriginals or people of aboriginal descent is well known, and much depends on the idiosyncracies of the census staff. There have, in fact, been considerable variations at each census as shown in the margin, from

Animists.	Hindus.
528,899	650,210
605,523	847,309
726,284	900,820
632,068	1,015,753

which, however, it will be seen that the number of Hindus has steadily increased. One of the features of the movement inaugurated during recent years by the Kharwārs or Santāl revivalists has been a leaning towards Hinduism, and it is only rarely that a reaction sets in. Such a reaction was noticed in 1901, when the women broke their lac bangles and took once more to home-made cloth instead of imported goods. The majority of the Muhammadans are believed to be descendants of low class converts made during the period of Mughal rule, and many of them can with difficulty be distinguished from the Hinduized aboriginals with whom they live side by side.

The number of Christians in the district, as enumerated at each census, was 392 in 1872, 3,056 in 1881, 5,943 in 1891 and 9,875 in 1901. Of these 9,875 Christians, 9,463 were natives, including 7,064 Santāls, and they were distributed among the different subdivisions as shown in the margin. The

Dumkā	... 3,778
Pāikaur	... 2,298
Rājmahāl	... 1,898
Jamtāra	... 664
Goddā	... 631
Deoghar	... 611

\* G. A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IV, pp. 446-7.

returns of the missionaries themselves do not agree with the census figures, showing much larger numbers—a discrepancy which may perhaps be explained by emigration.

The Church Missionary Society is at work in the Goddā, Pākaur and Rājmahāl subdivisions, and has also established a colony for its converts in the Western Duārs. Work was begun in 1862, the first missionaries being the Revd. E. L. Puxley and the Revd. W. T. Storrs. There are now four stations, the centres of evangelistic, educational and medical work, at Taljhari and Barharwā in the Rājmahāl subdivision, and at Pathrā and Bhagya in the Goddā subdivision.

The Scandinavian Lutheran Mission has been established in the Dumkā subdivision for over 40 years, work being started in 1867 by the Revd. H. P. Boerresen, a Dane, and by the Revd. L. O. Skrefsrud, a Norwegian, whose Santālī grammar is the chief authority on the language. The Mission is also known as the Indian Home Mission to the Santāls, because it was the intention of the founders to raise in India all the funds required for its support. It has twenty stations, the largest being at Benagharia, and also a colony in Assam, where it owns a tea garden. It has taken over an independent mission started in the Jāmtārā subdivision by the late Mr. Haegert, who had his headquarters at a station called Bethel, and established two branches of his mission in the Dumkā subdivision, one at Maharn about 5 miles west of Dumkā and the other at Dharampur near Kumrābād, 8 miles south of Dumkā.

Other missions are the Christian Women's Board of Missions, a Wesleyan Mission, which has established itself in the Deoghar subdivision, and the American Methodist Episcopal Mission, which started work in the Pākaur subdivision under the Revd. J. P. Meik in 1884. The converts of the latter are mostly Hindus and Muhammadans, very few being Santāls. It maintains a boarding school with an industrial branch, at which boys and girls are taught poultry-keeping, gardening, fruit-farming and carpentry. The Plymouth Brethren have stations at Jāmtārā, Karmatānr and Mihijam, and the Christian Disciples at Deoghar.

Ethnologically the Santāl Parganas are one of the most interesting districts of Bengal owing to the variety of races found in it, for two-fifths of the total population is purely aboriginal, one-fifth is semi-aboriginal, three-tenths belong to Hindu caste and one-tenth are Muhammadans. Generally speaking, the hilly country is inhabited mainly by Santāls, Pahārias and other aboriginal tribes; the undulating region by semi-aboriginal races, with a smaller proportion of aborigines and a fair sprinkling of Aryan

settlers; and the alluvial strip of country almost entirely by Aryans.

The earliest settlers in the district are believed to be the Pahārias, one branch of whom, *viz.*, the Maler, has been identified with the people called Malli by Megasthenes. This race found a refuge in the Rājmahāl Hills, and there they have to this day retained their peculiar customs. The other branch of the tribe, the Māl Pahārias, who are found in the south and west, has become Hinduized, and, unlike the Maler, they have no distinct language. Other early occupants of the district were the Bhuiyās, who held the forest tracts and passes, and owned allegiance to the Khetauris or Katauris. The latter seem to have had their chief seat at Kharagpur in the south of the Monghyr district, and to have exercised supermacy in the south of Bhāgalpur and the north of this district until they were overcome by Rājput adventurers from the north of India, who founded the Kharagpur Rāj and subsequently became Muhammadans. Regarding the relations of these Khetauris and Bhuiyās, Mr. H. McPherson, I.C.S., writes:—“Katauri domination was confined to the region west of the hills, and the Bhuiyās were the aborigines of the forest tracts, over whom the Katauris exercised sway, and to whom they were closely related by blood and intermarriage. The Katauris had possession of the more open country to the north, the Bhuiyās held the forest tracts as *ghāt-wāls* under the Katauris. . . . The Bhuiyās belong to the same Dravidian stock as the hill Maler. They have lost their Dravidian tongue and have taken on a veneer of Hinduism. Their chiefs make the usual Kshattriya pretensions and calling themselves Sūrjyabansis disclaim connection with their Bhuiyā kinsmen. But the physical characteristics of all are alike Dravidian, and in Captain Browne's time (1772-78) the chiefs never thought of claiming to be other than Bhuiyā. The highest chiefs of the Bhuiyās are called Tikaits and are supposed to have received the mark of royalty. Inferior chiefs are called Thākurs, and the younger members of noble Bhuiyā families are called Bābus. Wealth and position do not always coincide with birth. The head of the Lakshmīpur family, for example, is a Thākur, while the Patrol *ghāt-wāl*, a much less considerable person, is a Tikait.”

The number of Khetauris at the census of 1901 was returned as only 1,431, but the similarity of the name (which is also spelt Khetari or Kheturi) with Kshattriya and the claim of the Khetauris to be Kshattriya have, it is believed, led to them being regarded as Rājputs in many cases. Mr. W. B. Oldham, indeed, who has made a special study of them, estimates their number at

30,000. The Bhuiyās, on the other hand, have a strength of 115,059, and are found mainly in the upland country to the west of the hills in the Dumkā, Goddā and Deoghar subdivisions.

The following table shows the numerical strength (according to the census of 1901) of the different castes and tribes exceeding 10,000, classified under four heads, *viz.*, Hindus, Aborigines, Semi-aborigines and Muhammadans:—

<i>Hindus.</i>			<i>Aborigines.</i>		
	Number.	Proportion.		Number.	Proportion.
<b>(a) High castes—</b>			Santal ...	663,471	86.6
Rājput ...	42,191	2.4	Maler(Sauriā Panāria)	47,066	2.6
Brāhman ...	34,136	1.9	Māl Pahāria ...	25,628	1.4
Others ...	12,153	0.7	Others ...	12,606	0.7
Total ...	89,480	5.0	Total ...	748,771	41.3
<b>(b) Pastoral and agricultural castes—</b>			<i>Semi-aborigines.</i>		
Ahīr and Goālā ...	108,689	6.0	Bhuiyā (including (Ghātāl).)	127,124	7.0
Kahār and Beharā ...	18,101	1.0	Dom ...	44,546	2.5
Kurmī ...	16,700	0.9	Chamār and Muchi ...	35,543	1.9
Dhānuk ...	14,708	0.8	Musahar ...	28,432	1.6
Koiri ...	14,464	0.8	Bauri ...	23,069	1.3
Others ...	10,752	0.6	Chain ...	20,031	1.1
Total ...	188,420	10.1	Mahili ...	15,862	0.9
<b>(c) Trading and industrial castes—</b>			Dosādī ...	12,109	0.7
Teli and Kalu ...	42,873	2.4	Rājwār ...	12,107	0.6
Kalwār and Sunri ...	33,193	1.8	Hārī and Mehtar ...	10,985	0.6
Kumbhār ...	27,473	1.5	Others ...	40,541	2.2
Kāmār and Lohār ...	24,407	1.3	Total ...	369,419	20.5
Weaving castes ...	21,110	1.2	<i>Muhammadans.</i>		
Hajjām and Nāpit ...	17,867	1.0	Sheikh ...	77,425	4.3
Halwai, Mayara and Kāndu.	16,915	0.9	Jolāhā ...	62,764	3.5
General traders (Baniyā, etc.).	14,443	0.8	Others ...	11,894	0.6
Fishing castes ...	10,566	0.6	Total ...	151,998	8.3
Others ...	24,622	1.4			
Total ...	238,469	12.9			

From this table it will be seen that the Santals are the predominant race in the district. They are comparatively newcomers, not being found in the district till the end of the 18th century. Since then, however, one body after another has poured into the district, until they are now found in all parts of it, being most numerous in the Dāmin-i-koh, where they account for

nearly two-thirds of the population, and least numerous in the Deoghar subdivision, where, however, they account for one-fifth of the inhabitants and are more numerous than any other caste or tribe. An account of them will be given in the next chapter. In this chapter it is proposed only to give an account of the Pahārias, a race peculiar to this district.

The Pahārias are divided into two branches:—(1) the Maler, PAHĀRIAS. also known as the Male Pahārias or Sauriā Pahārias, who are found in the north of the Rājmahāl Hills, and (2) the Māl Pahārias, who are found in the south of the hills and also in the hilly and wooded country in the south and west of the district. The word Maler is generally written Māler, but it is written Maler both by Mr. W. B. Oldham, who made a special study of them and by the Revd. E. Droese, whose grammar is the chief authority on their (Malto) language; and that spelling will therefore be adopted. The name is said to be simply the plural of Male, meaning "he is a man," but another theory is that the name is derived from the common Dravidian word Mala, meaning mountain, so that the original meaning of the name would be hillmen. The origin of the name Sauria is doubtful; it has been suggested that it originates in the term Savāla Pahār being applied by Hindus to the Rājmahāl Hills. The Santāls call the Maler Mundas, and the Hindus call them simply Pahārias.

A clue to their origin is found in the tradition of the Oraons that their original home was in the Carnatic, whence they went up the Nerbada river and settled in Bihār on the banks of the Son. Driven thence by the Muhammadans, the tribe split into two divisions. One of these, now represented by the Oraons, ascended the Son into Palāmau, and, turning eastward along the Koel, took possession of the north-western portion of Chotā Nāgpur. The other branch, following the course of the Ganges, settled in the Rājmahāl Hills and were the progenitors of the Maler. In these hills, hemmed in by the Ganges on the north and east, and shut off from the outer world by thick forest on the south and west, the Maler have remained almost untouched by outside influences to this day. They have no characteristic of language in common with the races which surround them, from which too, they differ in physiognomy, in their social habits, in the way of forming their villages and houses, and in their methods of cultivation.

The Maler are now inhabitants of the northern portion of the Maler. Dāmin-i-koḥ, where they occupy the hillsides and tops of the hills, having been driven from the richer valleys by the more enterprising and industrious Santāls. They live in village



communities, each of which claims as its property certain hills, the boundaries of which are not well defined. Some of their villages contain 40 or 50 houses, but the majority are small, seldom containing more than ten houses. Each village has a headman or *mānjhi*, who is ordinarily a stipendiary, receiving an allowance of Rs. 2 a month from Government. Besides these, there are headmen called *tikri mānjhis* or *tikridārs*, who hold either areas in the stipendiary villages with a sort of under-headman's rights or independent areas in which they exercise all a headman's rights. Such areas are called *tikris* (possibly from the Hindi *tikri*, a patch of poor soil) and appear to originate in the *tikridārs* taking possession of portions of a hill and clearing them with their own labour or with the aid of other ryots. All the village communities fall within recognized divisions presided over by chiefs called *sardārs*, under whom are sub-chiefs called *naihs*. In some ways they correspond to the Santāl *parganants* and *des-mānjhis* respectively, but they are stipendiaries of Government receiving a monthly allowance, in return for which they have to report criminal offences and vital statistics. The *sardārs* claim to hold all the villages subject to them, and the hills pertaining to those villages, as their own free property, subject only to the villagers' own rights. They claim and receive both a fixed yearly due and also a portion of the produce or profit derived by the villagers from the hills.

The Maler support themselves by the *jhūm* or *kurāo* method of cultivation, i.e., a patch of land is cleared with axe and fire, the soil is hoed and seeds are dibbled in among the ashes, the site thus cleared and cultivated being known as a *jhūm* or *kurāo*. The process is repeated at intervals of five years, with the result that in some long ranges practically all vegetation has disappeared for miles, the slopes looking as if they had been scoured by landslips. The Maler supplement their crops by the products of the chase, but they are not expert archers or hunters.

Physical  
character-  
istics.

The Maler is short of stature and slight of make, with limbs long in proportion to his low stature. His complexion is a light brown; his nose is not prominent but flat and broad at the base and his eyes have the peculiar beady look of the Dravidian. His hair is long and ringleted, and he keeps it well oiled and combed in a knot on the top of his head. According to Sir Herbert Risley, "in respect of physical characteristics the Maler represent the extreme type of the Dravidian race as we find it in Bengal. The nasal index measured on 100 men of the tribe yields an average of 94.5, which closely approaches the proportions ascertained for the Negro."

Their general manner of life has been well described by Captain Sherwill, who wrote:—"The hill-man is much shorter <sup>Manner of life.</sup> than the Sonthāl, of a much slighter make, is beardless or nearly so, is not of such a cheerful disposition, nor is he so industrious; his great delight appears to be attending the neighbouring markets, where, decked out with beads and chains, his hair fastidiously combed, oiled and ornamented, he will, in company with his friends both male and female, while away the greater part of the day. Labour is the hill-man's abhorrence, but necessity compels him to cultivate a small portion of the land for his actual existence; beyond this trifling labour he never exerts himself. He will nevertheless fish, or hunt or roam over miles of the forest searching for honey-combs, wild yams and other edible roots; he will travel many miles to get a shot at a deer or to secure a peacock. Such labour he considers in the light of amusement, but to have to clear away the forest for his crop he considers a great hardship; but clear it he must, and the hill-man generally chooses the most precipitous hillsides as the ground best fitted for his crops. In these spots an iron-shod staff or a pointed stick hardened by charring is used instead of the plough. With this implement holes are made in the soil at the distance of a foot or less from each other, into which are dropped a mixture of the following seeds, Indian corn, junera, bora beans and the seeds of several small pulses. The tall and robust Indian-corn and junera form an ample support to the twining bora bean, which in its turn affords a beneficial shade to the more delicate pulses at its feet. The heads of the Indian-corn when ripe are stocked in bamboo granaries of various shapes, and which are raised off the ground on posts; whilst those required for immediate use are strung up to the roof of the huts, and as required for food are submitted to the operation of being husked in a wooden mortar; of the meal of this grain a thick and nutritious pasty-pudding is made, which forms the principal food of the hill people. The junera is treated in the same way, but the bora bean, kam ruhur and pulses are beaten out either by rubbing with the hand or by beating them on a log of wood." The Maler do not confine themselves to this vegetarian fare. They eat beef, pork, domestic fowls and all kinds of fish, and indulge freely in strong drink.

They are, on the whole, lazy and poor. "Abject poverty is no misnomer among the Saorias of to-day; six annas has to suffice many a family for victuals over eight weary days. Thriftless to a degree the Saoria garners but to squander at a festival, or to become the fortunate possessor of a godling. Superstition, and its Handmaid Imagination, mould him at will, and in the

grove or the tree he beholds with terror the Jampori (Demno ghost) and invests the inexplicable power of the railway train with a capacity for compassing the direst evil. He ascribes an epidemic of small-pox or cholera to the advent of inimical spirits by railway. He exorcises them by constructing a rude model of a train, wheels it through the village, and into the jungle, and desires the invisible passengers to journey onwards. Such is the Saoria of to-day, and such has he been for countless generations.”\* They have five territorial divisions, viz., Parte in the centre of the hill tract, Mandro on the north, Pubbi on the east, Chetteh on the east from Tinpahar, and Dakrni on the south and in the Pākaur subdivision. *There is no prohibition of intermarriage among these divisions.* The dormitory system prevails, i.e., the marriageable girls have a house to themselves and the youths another. Sexual license, though prohibited in theory, is tolerated in practice; feasts and religious festivals end in riotous indulgence. Social affairs are regulated by a village *panchayat* composed, according to old custom, of the Sinyare or village headman, the Bandāri or village messenger, the Kotwāri, who is an executive official, and the Giri, who is an influential villager. The Bandāri performs certain duties on ceremonial occasions, such as marriages and burials; and either he or the Demno (i.e., the diviner) preaches at ceremonies and festivals, exhorting the younger generation to observe the tribal customs and code of morals.

#### Religion.

The following account of certain customs of the Maler is taken from *the Saorias of the Rajmahal Hills*, by Mr. R. B. Bainbridge (Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. II, No. 4), to which the reader is referred for further details. An interesting account will also be found in Colonel Dalton's *Ethnology of Bengal*, but this account was based mainly on a monograph by Lieutenant Shaw published in the Asiatic Researches of 1795. The information contained in the latter was obtained by Lieutenant Shaw from members of the corps of Hill Rangers at Bāgalpur and was apparently not verified locally. Colonel Dalton himself, it is plain, did not trust the monograph entirely, for he states that his account of the Pahāria doctrines and ethics is an abstract of that communicated to Lieutenant Shaw by a *Subahdār*, who had been a *protégé* of Mr. Cleveland, and had received some education from him. He adds—“I suspect the *Subahdār* was himself the ‘Manu’ of his tribe, and that many of his precepts were inspired by his patron.”

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\* R. B. Bainbridge, *The Saorias of the Rajmahal Hills*, Memoirs A.S.B., Vol. II, No. 4, 1907.

The religion of the Maler is animism of the type common among Dravidian tribes. The deities worshipped by them are—Ber or Beru Gosain, Bilp Gosain, Laihu Gosain, Darmāre Gosain, Jārmātre Gosain. These gods are not represented by idols; no special form of worship is prescribed; there is no special day fixed for their worship. They have no priests, and sacrifices are not offered to them except when the godlings of the Sauriā pantheon are worshipped. Laihu, Darmāre and Jārmātre Gosain\* are invisible: the representations of Ber Gosain and Bilp Gosain are seen in the heavens as the sun and the moon. Jārmātre and Darmāre Gosains, although separate deities, are regarded as attributes of Laihu Gosain. These gods are invoked at all ceremonies. They have power to benefit cultivation and also the public health, and they possess much greater power than the godlings. There are 23 godlings, besides several devils and evil spirits who have to be duly propitiated. Among the latter may be mentioned the Jampori *i.e.*, the spirit of a dead Demno or diviner, which haunts and kills pregnant women.

As an example of the mode of worship of godlings the following is quoted:—"In the case of illness should the Demno or Charri Beddu advise a *puya* to Gumo Naddu, the householder takes rice and water and sprinkles them on the patient and in his house, saying: "If recovery takes place, I will sacrifice to thee, O Gumo Gosain." The year having gone by, the date and name of the Tallu Beddu are ascertained and *pochai* is made ready. Two *sal* trees† are selected and the Tallu kills a fowl and sprinkles them with the blood. He then paints them with *sindur* and offers rice, *pochai* and *patki taddi* (*dāru*). After this the trees are felled and the bark is taken off. They are then carried and placed in front of the householder's dwelling in line on the ground. The height of the house is measured while the Demno starts his incantations. When the poles are ready, the Demno gets astride of them and he is carried round the house five times. Before taking him round, however, his body is covered with the red ants found on mango trees, in order to ascertain whether the spirit has really entered, or whether the Demno is shamming! The bite of this large red ant is excruciating! The poles are then taken inside the dwelling, and fixed to, and lashed side by side with, the central post of the house on the south.‡

\* Laihu Gosain—the Creator. Darmāre Gosain—Divinity of Truth, etc. Jārmātre—Divinity of Birth.

† One tree for the wife and the other tree for the husband.

‡ The Gumo Gosain *puya* takes place in February and March.

A mud altar is erected and *sindur* is applied thereon. Offerings of rice and *makai* are scattered and *dāru* is sprinkled. The Demno does not allow the liquor to be wasted; he also eats the offerings in his excitement, saying "The god comes from this path," and other matters. Then the goat is brought and its head is taken off, the Demno drinking the blood as usual from the severed neck. This finishes the *puja*, and the feasting and carousals begin. Men and women dance together, and the festival ends in a licentious orgie."

The performance of *pujas* is a frequent occurrence. "*Pujas*," writes Mr. Bainbridge, "are offered on the village path to models of trains, umbrellas, elephants with three constables and two *mahauts* armed with swords and guns, also to leopards and tigers. When a *puja* is necessary, models of these are made and the ceremony takes place on the pathway leading to the village. In case of illness sometimes the Demno fixes upon a train after consulting the oracles. He says: "Many devils have come into the village by train: make offerings and cast them out." In the case of the elephant, constables and *mahauts*, the same thing is done. Leopards and tigers are propitiated, and *pujas* are offered to prevent them from entering the village. *Puja* to the umbrella is also offered in the case of sickness. These ceremonies may take place during the course of an illness, and they are performed immediately, except in the case of the umbrella as more elaborate arrangements are required, and the ceremony ends with a dance. Small-pox and cholera epidemics are often ascribed to the advent of many devils by train. The elephant is also able to bring a number of devils, and it is said to be wise to sacrifice to them. These devils are not described, and the models of the train and elephant are thrown in the place indicated by the Demno, or by one of the village women who is in the habit of being possessed by Gurya Gosain".

**Marriage.** A girl may not marry her brother, or any near blood relatives; she may, however, marry her fourth cousin. A man may marry an elder sister and a younger sister, but not a younger sister and then an elder sister. He may marry five or six wives, and may even marry five or six sisters provided the eldest sister be willing. The first wife is the chief wife, and all others are her subordinates. All the household property is considered to be under her charge; the servants (if any) are under her orders. Her sons succeed to a third share of the father's property; the balance goes to the other wives and their children. In case of illness or absence of the first wife, the second wife occupies her place and is vested with her privileges. The

wives all live in the same house. At night the husband sleeps in the centre, and the wives occupy beds on either side. In case of his having intercourse with a younger wife, without the consent of the elder wife, the husband is liable, on complaint, to a fine according to circumstances; for the first offence a warning is administered. A man may keep as many concubines as he can afford besides wives, but can only do so with the consent of the chief wife and the girls themselves.

Marriage between first cousins and second cousins is not allowed. When an intrigue between them is suspected, a *panchāyat* is called, and, on satisfactory proof of the offence, two fowls (not capons) and two pigs are taken from the guilty parties. They are slaughtered and the blood is sprinkled with water at all the houses in the village by the Bandāri. Salt is then brought by the Bandāri and mixed with water in a leaf in the presence of the *panchāyat*. The Bandāri then says: "If you two come together again, you will die within five days of the connection. You are henceforth separate. O Gosain! these two are henceforth separate; if they come together again, destroy them within five days." The salt is placed on the leaf with the point of a sword or knife, or with the claw of a tiger or leopard. The offenders are made to drink the mixture by the Bandāri. As the delinquents get up to go, the Bandāri tears two *sāl* leaves, one for each offender, repeating the curse. The girl and her parents keep the offspring of such a union. If a boy, he is admitted into caste without any special ceremonies, but until marriage he is not allowed to eat at *pūjas* performed by the village. After marriage he is allowed to do so, if he gives a feast to the village. In the case of a girl, she takes her place with other women after marriage, but her husband has to feast the villagers.

If a younger sister's husband and an elder sister have a *liaison*, the man is fined Rs. 20 and is outcasted; the woman has her head shaved and painted with saffron and lime, and she is taken all round the village by the Bandāri and made a public spectacle. The offenders are also told to go away and die in the jungle. If they have obtained property and a fresh household godling, they are readmitted to caste, after giving a feast to the village. The woman does not desert her lover, for the payment of Rs. 20 expiates the sin so far as she is concerned. This money is spent in a feast, at which the liver of a pig is broiled, offered with *patki taddi* (*dāru*) to the ancestors of the offenders with the words:—"Grant, O ancestors, that this sin be not put to the account of the village, but to the account of the

offenders themselves." The liver and liquor are disposed of by the *panchayat*.

There is nothing to prevent a Sauriā from marrying a woman of another caste. This cannot be done according to old custom, but in practice the man and woman are admitted to caste by means of the usual feast. When they die, however, they are not buried in the Pahāria cemetery until Re. 1 has been paid for each of them to the village headman. This sum is termed *bewah koreh* (*bewah*, offering at a *pūja*, and *koreh*, together). The children of such unions are Sauriās, are subject to no fines and penalties, and pay nothing to be buried in the village graveyard.

Funeral  
cere-  
monies.

The following account of the funeral ceremonies of the Maler is given by Mr. Bainbridge:—"The dead are buried; the ancient custom is interment. After death the corpse is washed and oiled by the relatives. It is then clothed in its best apparel, *sindur* is placed on the forehead and chest, one line down the nose and one line down the chest. Bows, arrows, all personal property, are brought and placed with the corpse. In the case of a woman, all her jewellery is put with the corpse; only one article belonging to the deceased is retained and produced on days of festival and *pūjas* as a 'souvenir.' After this, the corpse is carried outside the house, and placed with its head towards the west, the feet being towards the east. Before taking the corpse outside, grain is scattered within and without the house, and, as a rule, the path taken by the corpse to the graveyard has grain scattered along its length for some distance. There is general lamentation. The corpse is carried by four individuals, relatives or others. A fowl is killed and is cooked with *makai* (Indian corn) and put in an earthen plate. On the way to the graveyard the *khatia* (bed) is placed on the ground, and all the relatives have one last look. From this point all the women-folk return. On reaching the graveyard, the grave is dug in depth to the height of an ordinary man, the bottom of the grave is laid out with poles and leaves, and the corpse is taken off the *khatia* and placed at the bottom of the grave on the poles and leaves. Then one of the relatives takes two leaves of the *bhelur* plant (*Semecarpus anacardium*) and places them over the face of the corpse. Poles are then driven in horizontally about half-way up the grave so as to make a platform over the dead body. After this the grave is filled in. The corpse is rifled of its jewellery and brass plates by the bearers. All the clothes of the corpse are torn in pieces and buried with the body. The grave finally has stones put on the top, and the cooked *makai* and fowl are placed at the four corners of the grave, saying: 'This is for you, O son, or

wife; may your ancestors eat this and keep you in safety with them.' The party then bathes and returns home.

"A corpse is buried on the day of death. Arrows and bows, sticks and bead necklaces are buried; articles of real value are brought away. The grave is dug east and west, and the body is placed with its head to the west. No prayers or *mantras* are repeated and the Demno is not required to be present. All articles taken away by the bearers are sold, and a *khassi* (goat) is bought by them with the proceeds and eaten.

"When the bearers return they receive a bull, cow, goat, pig or fowl, according to circumstances. The animal is killed outside the village, and cooked rice is provided by the relatives of the deceased. The party eats, and, after eating, the leaves used as plates are collected by the Bandāri, who place a wattle screen thereon; he then sits on it with two other persons—five persons may sit but not more; everyone is brought forward and asked: 'What claims have you against the deceased and what suspicions have you regarding his death?' Claims not put forward at this time receive no recognition afterwards. Suspicion as regards witchcraft, or death by poison, also must be put forward at this time. This being done, the Bandāri collects the leaf plates and carries them, with the receptacle in which they are carried, and places them on the spot where the dead body was put down in order to enable the relations to have a last look. There are no ceremonies in respect of purification in the case of death. Death does not render the relatives unclean. During five days the near relatives of the deceased abstain from eating food cooked with oil and turmeric. After five days an animal is killed on behalf of the deceased within the village. The same day the bearers kill the animal purchased by them with the proceeds of property taken from the deceased. This animal is killed, cooked and eaten by them outside the village; the bearers and relatives and all the villagers, women and children, sit outside their houses, and *makai* rice and meat are given in *bhelua* leaves to everybody. *Pochai* is also given. Before feasting, some broiled liver, *pochai* and *makai* rice are placed by all the guests at the spot where the body was first laid down. These things are placed in *bhelua* leaves, and the relatives take precedence in making the offering. The deceased is called upon by name to accept the offerings made, and he is told of all that has been done for him; then everyone begins the feast. After this the elders sit and repeat a homily to the relatives, which may be translated as follows: 'Be not sorrowful, his days are ended and he has now been taken by the Laihu Gossān (Maker).' After the lapse of a year invitations



to another feast are sent to all relatives, and these relatives bring offerings of rice and *pochai*.

"The Charri Beddu ties a stone to a string, or balances a bow, and sits facing the east, holding the string and the stone suspended. He says, 'O Ber Gosain, in whose name shall the drums be beaten to please the deceased?' Names are repeated until the pendulum or bow oscillates. The drums are beaten, according to the measure for this ceremony, by the individual thus selected. The Charri Beddu then asks: 'Who shall kill the goat to please thee, O deceased Rāma?' The name being ascertained, the Demno, who is present, is given some *pochai* inside the house, and he comes outside and everyone follows him. Straw is placed for him and he sits thereon. He takes a quantity in his hands. He washes his feet and hands, and then sits and calls to the deceased waving the straw in his hands: 'Oh come, these things are for thee; come, oh come! By the godlings and demons, by the rocks and the jungles, by all the powers of darkness and light, come, O Rāma, come to the feast provided for thee,' etc. This incantation has to be seen; it is indescribable. The Demno becomes more and more excited, his limbs tremble and his voice comes from him in gasps and yells until, on a sudden, he says: 'I am here! I am Rāma!!' Then his relatives fall on him, and, weeping and laughing, dress him in saffron-stained garments. The Demno asks for things required by him, brass plates, and money too, if he has taken the trouble beforehand to find out where it is hidden. He says, 'O mother where is my *thallia*, or money: bring it, mother. I and my ancestors are very poor, and I wish to take it with me; bring me so and so, father or aunt or sister!' Everything desired is given without suspicion. He also asks for food, and a quantity of each of the different kinds of food provided is heaped on a plate, and placed in the Demno's hands; being Rama, he eats and drinks and throws pieces of food over his shoulders to his deceased relatives calling them by name! While he is eating, the goat is killed and some of the blood is sprinkled over the food; while the blood is being sprinkled, the Demno seizes the goat, and, placing his mouth to the severed neck, drinks the blood. He also eats the mixture in his plate. The deceased's relatives have all placed something in the plate according to request, or, according to their own wishes. The Demno's mouth and face are smeared with blood. He yells and groans: he is truly an appalling spectacle!

"The opportunity is taken by the deceased's relatives to ask questions as to why he left them, etc., etc., and these are answered according to the ingenuity of the Demno, or they are met by

requests for articles! Menstruating females are not permitted to feed the Demno. Having satiated himself with blood, the Demno says: 'I am now going back, I have eaten and drunken, and I am going back to Ber Gosain or Laihu Gosain'. Saying this, he falls down in a fit, rigid, and, to all intents and purposes, dead! Water is then poured over him and uncooked rice is thrown on him. This brings him back to consciousness. He then takes water, and, after striking the near relatives with his matted locks, he sprinkles the water on the assembled crowd, saying: 'All sins are washed away.' He now throws away the straw. The articles collected by him, while personating the deceased, become his own property. Having been given to the deceased, at his own request, no one dares to touch them except the Demno and his personal companions. All parties then adjourn to the feast, which lasts all night to the beating of drums. Dances are given by the girls and men, and the feast lasts as long as the *pochai* and food hold out. Before the guests leave, the nearest male relatives of the deceased on the father's and mother's side offer a piece of broiled liver and *pochai* and rice to Ber Gosain, saying: 'Let not such a feast be given again in his house, let such feasts be given again only on occasions of rejoicing and festival!' This ceremony is called *amte* (Malto), and *bhauj*, farewell (Hindi). Then the relatives and guests give money or other gifts to their hosts; and the hosts present two pigs or more to their guests. These are shot with arrows, and, after being cut up, the guests divide the meat, leaving one share to the hosts, and then take their departure after a general shaking of hands in the English fashion: the shaking of the right hand is a very old custom amongst men and women.

"These ceremonies apply to men, females and boys, but not to infants unable to speak. Such infants are buried outside the regular graveyard, and the bearers, before re-entering the village, are sprinkled with water by the Bandāri. He also breaks an egg by casting it into the jungle, saying: 'May the disease which killed the child not attack the villagers.' A man or woman dying of small-pox is not buried. The body is covered with thorns, or wood, and left in the jungle in a hole! The five days' ceremony does not take place. When the village is free from disease, the feast and rejoicings described above take place. In such cases only clothes go with the corpse; and on the *amte* day the bearers get an extra share of the feast. In cholera the same customs are followed and the village is under taboo. In neither case is the corpse placed on the ground for a last view on its way to the jungle. In case of death by accident or snake-bite the

usual ceremony is observed. In case of death by tigers, or other wild animals, the same customs are followed if the body is found; if not, the usual feast takes place after the lapse of a year.

"The Pahārias do not employ Brahmans or Hindus as priests. In the case of a Pahāria suffering capital punishment, or dying in a far country, the *bhaug* always takes place. The Simlong (Pākaur) and Chandana (Goddā) Pahārias burn their dead sometimes, but this is comparatively a new custom. It is inaccurate to say that the Demno is not buried. He is buried except when he dies without relatives; but anyone dying without relatives is left in the jungle. In the case of a chief a house is built over the grave, but this house is not repaired and gradually disappears. On the horizontal stakes at the bottom of the grave, *bhelua* or *sāl* leaves are laid, and the corpse is placed thereon. In some cases the whole corpse is covered with leaves."

Māl Pahā-  
rias.

The Māl Pahārias are a Hinduized section of the tribe, and differ in many respects from the Maler. They have the same slender build, but are darker, and also dirtier. They cut their hair short, and some of them are taller and more robust than the Maler. Not only have they taken on a veneer of Hinduism, but they have adopted the language of their Aryan neighbours, speaking a corrupt form of Bengali. They are also far more advanced in their methods of cultivation, for they have learned to cultivate with the plough. They still *ghūm*, however, in the South Pākaur and South Goddā portions of the Dāmin-i-koh; in the Dumkā Dāmin the practice has been stopped for many years by the Forest Department. Like the Maler, they cultivate the hill summits, but these often consist of miniature tablelands, especially in the south and south-western ranges: it is surprising what an amount of level surface one finds on them after climbing the steep hillsides.

They now regard the Maler as barbarians, contemptuously calling them Chet (a corruption of the Hindi *Chit* meaning supine), while one branch arrogates for itself the title of Kumārbhāg, i.e., the princely race, and claims kinship with the Rājput family of Sultānābād. There appears to be little doubt however, of their common origin, and in Kunwarpal, which is, the wildest and least accessible part of the Dāmin-i-koh, they assimilate in polity and mode of cultivation more to the Maler in the north than to their brethren elsewhere in the district. Here also they prefer to speak the Maler tongue instead of the dialect used by the Māl Pahārias of the south and west. In fact, in this *tappa*, which lies on the boundary between the two sections of the Pahārias, they are said to be undistinguishable from the

Maler in language, habits and appearance. Here the Santāls have generally gained access to the higher valleys, where they cultivate the rich deep soil with the plough, while the Māl Pahārias seem to have clung to the steep hillsides with their *jhūms*, though they also use the plough in the flatter portions of the hill tops. Outside the Dāmin-i-koh, in the south-west of the district and in the Deoghar subdivision the Māl Pahārias prefer to call themselves Naiyā (or the reformed race) and Pujahar (or worshippers). In this part of the district they form the chief labouring class, but many of them have small agricultural holdings, and they often hold the post of village watchman. Their cultivation in the plains differs in no respect from that of their neighbours, though they are still addicted to *jhūming*, which they call *kuruābāri*, if they get an opportunity.

Regarding the different social characteristics of the Māl Pahārias, the following remarks of Mr. W. B. Oldham are of interest:—"It is only in Kunwarpal, where they stand alone in their hills, preserving, remnant though they are, much the same position as when they were a comparatively powerful race and first embraced Hinduism, that the Mals maintain a position at all proportionate to their claims to caste. In the plains, where they are dominated by their more Aryan and more purely Hindu neighbours, they retain only the titles which connect them with a royal race, and are otherwise among the lowest of the low. In the Deoghar subdivision they are called Pujahars and Naiyās; the former, I believe, merely a nickname evoked by the novelty of a jungle race being seen to perform Hindu worship; and the latter designating them, in distinction from their old demon-worship, as followers of a new creed."\*

The following account of the religion, funeral and marriage Religion. customs of the Māl Pahārias is quoted from Sir Herbert Risley's *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*:—"At the head of the Pahāria religion stands the sun, to whom reverential obeisance is made morning and evening. On occasional Sundays a special worship is performed by the head of the family, who must prepare himself for the rite by eating no salt on the previous Friday and fasting all Saturday, with the exception of a light meal of molasses and milk, taken at sunset after bathing. Before sunrise on Sunday morning a new earthen vessel, a new basket, some rice, oil, areca nuts and vermilion, and a brass *lotā* of water with a mango branch stuck in it, are laid out on a clean space of ground in front of the house. The worshipper shows these offerings to the

\* *Some Historical and Ethnical Aspects of the Burdwan District.*

rising sun and prays, addressing the luminary as 'Gosain,' that he and his family may be saved from any specific danger or trouble that is supposed to threaten them. The rice is then given to a goat, which is decapitated while eating by a single blow from behind. The body of the animal is then cooked and served up at a feast, of which the neighbours partake; the head alone, which is deemed *prasād*, or sacred, being carefully reserved for the members of the family.

"Next in honour to the sun are Dharti Māi, mother earth; her servant, or as some say sister, Garāmi; and Singhbāhini, who bears rule over tigers, snakes, scorpions and all manner of noxious beasts. To the earth goats, pigs, fowls, etc., are offered in Asārḥ and Māgh, and buffaloes or goats are sacrificed about the time of the Hindu Durgā Pūjā to the goddess Singhbāhini, who is represented for sacrificial purposes by a lump of clay daubed with vermillion and oil and set up in front of the worshipper's house. The village *mānṣhi* officiates as priest. The Māgh worship of Dharti Māi is clearly the festival described by Colonel Dalton under the name Bhuindeb, the earth god.\* The Māis plant in their dancing place two branches of the *sāl* tree, and for three days they dance round these branches, after which they are removed and thrown into a river, which reminds one of the Karma festivals as solemnized by the Oraons and Kols in Chotā Nāgpur. On this occasion the men and women dance *vis-à-vis* to each other, the musicians keeping between. The men dance holding each other above their elbows, the left hand of one holding the right elbow of the other, whose right hand again holds the left elbow of the arm that has seized him. The fore-arms touching are held stiffly out and swayed up and down. They move sideways, advance and retire, sometimes bending low, sometimes erect. The women hold each other by the palms, interlacing the fingers, left palm upon right palm, and left and right fore-arms touching. They move like the men.

"Two curious points may be added. The man at whose instance or for whose benefit the ceremony is performed must sleep the night before on a bed of straw; and the dancing party, who are greatly excited with drink, shout continually *būr, būr* (*puerum muliebre*), a mode of invocation believed to be specially acceptable to the goddess. In this somewhat indelicate cry we may perhaps see a barbarous and undraped reference to the *vis genetrix naturæ* so prominent in many early forms of belief.

"Besides these greater elemental deities, the Māl Pahārias recognize and propitiate a number of vaguely-defined animistic powers, chief among whom is Chordanu, a malevolent spirit needing to be appeased at certain intervals with sacrifices and the first fruits of whatever crop is on the ground. To the same class belongs Mahādānā, for whom eggs are the appropriate offering. Among the standard Hindu deities Kālī and Lakṣmī Māi (Lakshmi) are honoured with sparing and infrequent worship, the offerings in this case being the perquisite of the village headmen.

"Ancestor worship is in full force, and the *sacra privata* of a Māl Pahāria household correspond precisely with those observed by the Maler tribe. The Lares are known to both by the familiar term Gumō Gosain or Deotā, the gods of the wooden pillar (*gumo*), which supports the main rafters of the house. Around this centre are grouped a number of balls of hardened clay, representing the ancestors of the family, to whom the first fruits of the earth are offered, and the blood of goats or fowls poured forth at the foot of the pillar that the souls may not hunger in the world of the dead. As every household is guarded by its ancestral gods, so every village has a tutelary deity of its own—*Larem agri custodem*—who lives in a *sāl* tree within the village. This tree is daubed with red lead and worshipped on certain occasions, and may on no account be cut down. The tribe have no priests, and the head of the household or village, as the case may be, performs all religious and ceremonial observances. Brāhmans, however, are, to some extent, held in honour, and presents are given to them on festal occasions.

"The dead are usually burned, and a piece of bone is saved from the flames to be thrown away into a river or a deep tank the waters of which do not run dry. The relatives are deemed impure, and may not eat salt for five days. At the end of that time they are shaved, and partake of a feast provided by the eldest son. The funeral expenses are a first charge on the estate, and after these have been paid the balance is equally divided among the sons, daughters getting no share. Very poor persons, who cannot afford to give a feast, bury their dead in a recumbent position with the head towards the south, and give nothing but a little salt and meal (*sattu*) to the friends who attend the funeral. In Buchanan's time it was the universal custom to bury the dead on the day of death. No *śrāddha* is performed by the Māl Pahārias proper, but some of the wealthier members of the Kumārbhāg sub-tribe are beginning to adopt a meagre form of this ceremony in imitation of their Hindu neighbours.

Disposal  
of the  
dead.

## Marriage.

"Marriage is either infant or adult. Girls are rarely married before the age of ten or eleven, and usually not until they are fully grown up. In the latter case sexual intercourse before marriage is tacitly recognized, it being understood that if an unmarried girl becomes pregnant her lover will come forward and marry her. A professional match-maker (*sithu*) is usually employed by the bridegroom's people to search for a suitable wife. When his selection has been made, a visit of inspection is paid by the parents; and if the proposed bride is approved of, the price to be paid for her is settled by personal discussion. Custom ordains that the amount shall be an odd number of rupees, not less than five, nor more than twenty-five. It must be paid, either in a lump sum or by instalments, before the marriage can be celebrated. On the occasion of the final payment the bridegroom's parents send by the *sithu* some *bāpra* beer and a *sāri* for the bride, which is made over to her maternal uncle to be kept till the day of the wedding. Particular inquiries were made regarding the reason for thus selecting the maternal uncle as a sort of trustee for the bride's *peculium*, but no definite result was arrived at; and this usage, undoubtedly one of great antiquity, seems only to be explicable as a survival of female kinship, a system of which no other traces are met with in the tribe.

"Shortly after the bride-price has been paid, the *sithu* is again sent to the bride's house, this time bearing an arrow wound round with yellow thread tied in as many knots as there are days to the date proposed for the wedding. The bride's people make their preparations accordingly, undoing a knot as each day passes. On the day before the bridegroom arrives and is lodged near the bride's house. Early next morning a big feast is given, after which the bridegroom takes his seat facing the east in a sort of arbour of *sāl* branches built for the purpose. Here he is joined by the bride, dressed, like him, in a new cotton wrapper dyed yellow with turmeric, who sits besides him while the maidens of his company comb out her hair. A *sāl* leaf cup is offered to the bridegroom, containing red lead, which he daubs on the bride's forehead and the parting of her hair. The girls who combed the bride's hair take her hand, dip a finger into the red lead, and make seven spots on the bridegroom's forehead. This final and trifling rite is received with a shout of applause, which is the signal for the Dom musicians in attendance to beat the drums for a dance. Towards evening the wedded pair go off to the bridegroom's house, where the whole party spend the night in dancing and drinking.

"Polygamy is permitted, and, in theory at least, there are no restrictions on the number of wives a man may have. Practically,

however, the poverty of the tribe and their hand-to-mouth fashion of living set strict limits to the exercise of this right, and few Pahārias indulge themselves with the luxury of a second wife, except when the first happens to be barren. A man may marry two sisters, but he must follow the order of age, and if already married to a younger sister, may not take an elder sister to wife.

"A widow may marry again. She is expected to marry her late husband's younger brother if there is one; but if he does not wish to marry her, any member of the caste not barred by the prohibited degrees may have her on paying a bride-price of Rs. 2 to her late husband's relatives. No ceremony is required, nor is *sindur* used. The husband merely gives the woman a new cloth and takes her to his house. A wife may be divorced with the sanction of the caste council or *panchāyat* for adultery or persistent and incurable ill-temper. As a rule arrangements of this sort are effected by mutual consent, the parties tearing a *sat* leaf in two before the *panchāyat* as a symbol of separation. The seducer of a married woman is required to repay to her husband the sum which she cost him as a virgin. Divorced wives may marry again in the same manner as widows, and for the same bride-price, which is paid to their own, not to their late husband's, relations."

It does not appear that the Pahārias are a dying race. A report submitted in 1836 by Mr. Dunbar, then Collector of Bhāgalpur, shows that Cleveland estimated their number in all the hills at 100,000; while he himself basing his calculation partly on personal knowledge and partly on the registered number of houses, estimated their number in the demarcated tract alone at about 50,000. These figures must be regarded as conjectural, but it is perhaps not an unfair assumption that, like other early estimates of population, they were in excess of the actual numbers. However that may be, the total number of Pahārias in the district was returned at the first census of 1872 as 86,335, viz., Māls 8,820, Naiyās 9,197 and Pahārias 68,336. In 1891 the total was no less than 136,497, viz., Māls 7,837, Māl Pahārias 17,068 and Pahārias 111,592; while the census of 1901 showed 88,114, viz., Māls 8,974, Male (Sauriā) 47,066, Māl Pahārias 25,628 and Maulik (Naiyās) 6,446. The divergencies are extraordinary, and it appears probable that the different groups were confused with one another by the enumerators. A careful analysis of the figures has been made by Mr. H. McPherson, I.C.S., with special reference to the information obtained in the course of the settlement; and his estimate is that the true number is approximately 131,000, viz., 68,000 for the Maler and 63,000 for the Māl Pahārias, including Naiyās, Pujahars and Mauliks, or nearly 7 per cent. of the total population of the



district. Without going into too much detail, it may be stated that it appears from the settlement records that the number in the Dāmin-i-koh alone is no less than 68,000, viz., 56,000 Maler and 12,000 Māl Pahārias, whereas the census of 1891 showed 54,767 Paharias in that tract and the census of 1901 only 27,867.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE SANTĀLS.

THE traditions of the Santāls represent them as a race wander-  
 ing from one country to another until they found their present home in Chota Nāgpur and the adjacent districts. Starting with the creation, these traditions tell us how the first human pair came into existence, how they fell into sin, *i.e.*, had sexual intercourse with one another, after having been taught to brew and drink *hāndi* by Litā, and how they begat seven sons and seven daughters, who ended in marrying one another, whereupon the human race greatly multiplied, but also became very wicked. This happened while they were living in Hihiri-pipiri. They then came to a land called Khoj-kamān, where God called upon them to return to Him; but they would not. Thereupon He decided to exterminate the race, sparing only one holy pair—whether the first pair or some other is forgotten—who were ordered to enter a cave in the mountain of Haratā. They obeyed, and then for seven days and seven nights it rained fire (or, as some say, water), so that all the rest of mankind and all animals were destroyed. After the rain of fire ceased the pair came out and a new human race sprang from them. They lived for some time close to Haratā, but moved from there to Sasan-beda, *i.e.*, a flat riverside land (*bedā*) with turmeric (*sasan*). Here the race was divided into nations and tribes having the same tribal names as the children of the first pair with five more added. From Sasan-beda they came to Jarpi. As they wandered on they encountered a high range of hills, in trying to cross which they nearly lost their lives. It was so high that it was long into the forenoon before they saw the sun—a proof, be it noted, that they were travelling east. Here they started worshipping Marang Buru (the big mountain); till then they had worshipped only God. Through the Sin pass and Baih pass they came to Aere, from there to Kaende, thence to Chae (Chai), and finally to Champā.

In Champā they lived in prosperity under their own kings for a

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\* This chapter has been compiled with the help of the Revd. P. O. Bodding of Mohulpahāri, whose kindness in revising the draft and contributing large additions I cannot too warmly acknowledge.

long time. At first they dwelt in peace with the Hindus, because they had helped Rāma against Rāvana, but later on they had fights with the Hindus and among themselves. In Champā several races (the Mundās, Bīrhors, Kurmīs and others) separated from what was, according to the traditions, till then the common Kharwār race. From Champā they came to Tore Pokhori Baha Bandela, where the people after twelve days' or twelve years' discussion—tradition has forgotten which—decided to give up certain old customs and to adopt new social customs. Thence they migrated to various places, *e.g.*, Sikhar and Sant, and at length came to their present homes.

On the basis of these traditions several theories have been put forward to account for the origin of the Santāls. The Revd. L. O. Skrefsrud has conjectured that they lived successively in Persia, Afghānistān and Chinese Tartary, and entered India from the north-west, that they settled in the Punjab and made their way thence to the Chotā Nāgpur plateau.\* Colonel Dalton believed that the Santāls came from North-East India, and found their way to the Chotā Nāgpur plateau and the adjoining highlands by the line of their sacred stream, the Dāmodar river. In support of this theory he cited certain remarkable coincidences of custom and language between the Santāls and some of the aboriginal tribes on the north-eastern frontiers of India, from which he inferred a connection in the remote past. This theory of a north-eastern origin was also accepted by Sir William Hunter in the *Annals of Rural Bengal*. Colonel Waddell, again, regards the Santāl tradition of their wanderings “as a record of actual tribal progress from the central alluvial valley of the Ganges south-westward to the hills, under pressure of the Aryan invasion of the valley from the north.”†

With reference to this theory Dr. A. Campbell writes:—“The theory which seems to me capable of proof is that the Santāls, or rather the people of whom they are a portion, occupied the country on both sides of the Ganges, but more especially that in the north. Starting from the north-east, they gradually worked their way up the valley of the Ganges till we find them in the neighbourhood of Benāres, with their headquarters near Mirzāpur. Here the main body, which had kept the northern bank of the river, crossed, and, heading southwards, came to the Vindhya hills. This obstruction deflected them to the left, and they at length found themselves on the tableland of Chotā Nāgpur.” Dr. Campbell further

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\* *Introduction to Grammar of Santālī Language*, 1878.

† *The Traditional Migration of the Santāl Tribe*, Indian Antiquary, 1898.

believes that the traditions point to a remote past and not to recent migrations inside the Chotā Nāgpur plateau. "Efforts," he writes, "have been made to identify the countries, rivers, forts, etc., mentioned in the traditions of the Santāls with those of similar names in Chotā Nāgpur. Localities have in many instances been found bearing traditional names, and the inference has been drawn that it was here that the traditions of the Santāls took their rise, and that their institutions were formed. But only a slight knowledge of these traditions is necessary to show that they belong to a much more remote period than the location of the Santāls in Chotā Nāgpur, and to countries separated from it by many hundreds of miles."\*

This latter theory is not accepted by Sir Herbert Risley, in whose opinion the legend of the Santals does not appear to deserve serious consideration as a record of actual wanderings. "A people whose only means of recording facts consists of tying knots in strings, and who have no bards to hand down a national epic by oral tradition, can hardly be expected to preserve the memory of their past long enough or accurately enough for their accounts of it to possess any historical value. If, however, the legends of the Santals are regarded as an account of recent migrations, their general purport will be found to be fairly in accord with actual facts." The same authority then proceeds to point out that it is clear that there was once a large and important Santāl colony in *parganas* Chai and Champā in the Hazāribāgh district, and that there is some evidence that a fort of theirs was taken by the Muhammadans. "If the date of the taking of this fort by Ibrāhīm Alī were assumed to be about 1340 A.D., the subsequent migrations of which the tribal legends speak would fill up the time intervening between the departure of the Santāls from Chai Champā and their settlement in the present Santāl Parganas. Speaking generally, these recent migrations have been to the east, which is the direction they might *prima facie* have been expected to follow. The earliest settlements which Santāl tradition speaks of, those in Ahir, Pipri, and Chai Champā, lie on the north-western frontier of the tableland of Hazāribāgh and in the direct line of advance of the numerous Hindu immigrants from Bihār. That the influx of Hindus has in fact driven the Santāls eastward is beyond doubt, and the line which they are known to have followed in their retreat corresponds on the whole with that attributed to them in their tribal legends."†

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\* A. Campbell, *Traditional Migration of the Santāl Tribes*, Indian Antiquary, 1894, pp. 108-4.

† *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Vol. II, pp. 225-6.

On this subject Mr. Boddington writes:—"It is as yet very difficult to say anything definite as to the origin of the Santals, or rather of the race to which they belong. They have had no written records of their own. To come to a conclusion, therefore, we have to examine and rely upon other materials. These are their traditions, their customs, their language, their anthropological features and what may be found in foreign records. As to their traditions, it is possible to accord them too high a value; but I feel sure no one who has got a true knowledge of them will be inclined to despise them. It is true they contain much phantastic stuff, apparently borrowed from foreigners. When you hear part of the story of the creation, you are reminded of myths of the same kind prevalent, *e.g.*, in Southern Burma. Much is childish. But, on the other hand, it is difficult to avoid the impression that below the surface there are remnants of true facts.

"The traditions have been handed down from *guru* to *chela* from generation to generation. They differ in minor details, but all have certain fragments of songs in common, which record the main events. The traditions have a practical interest for the people; they are repeated by the *gurus* on certain occasions, of which I shall only mention the so-called *chacho-chhātār*, the ceremonial feast when a young person is formally taken into the tribe and given the rights of a Santal. One indispensable part of the ceremony is that a *guru* recites the traditions, beginning with the creation and ending with how they came to their present home. It will be seen that in this way the traditions are always kept up to date, and that they possess a real living interest for the people, enough to give them more than a mythological value.

"I am inclined to believe that the Chai and Champā mentioned are to be found in Hazāribāgh and on the Chotā Nāgpur plateau, and from this point it is not difficult to verify the wanderings of the people as told by the traditions. As to what lies before that time and those places, it is difficult to pronounce an opinion. It cannot at best be anything more than a dim recollection, the more so when it is borne in mind that the Santals, shortly after leaving Champā, deliberately gave up old and adopted new social customs. I am inclined to think that the skeleton of the first part of the traditions refers to the remotest antiquity, but that the facts have possibly been mixed, so that details belonging to a later period may have been fitted on to an earlier one. That part of the traditions refers to the people's existence outside India seems beyond doubt.

"Before leaving the traditions I may mention three statements found in them. They may mean nothing or hide the solution of

the problem of the origin of this race. The first is the very beginning of the traditions, which says:—‘Towards the rising of the sun is the birth of man.’ The second is the statement (mentioned later in the section on mythology) that after the pair of swans (*hāns hasīl*) had got a boy and girl out of their eggs, and had fed and kept them for some time, they became very anxious as to where they should place them. They implored God to help them, and he recommended them to fly out and seek a place for the two human beings. They went forth towards the setting of the sun and found Hihīri Pipīri, reported this to God, and were ordered to take the boy and girl there, which they did carrying them on their backs. The third is that the old traditions say that man was born on the ocean. The traditions elsewhere declare or imply that the migrations have been towards the east, excepting perhaps the wanderings to Khoj-kamān and Sasan-bedā.

“As a general rule the customs and institutions of a people will give some hints as to their previous connections, and this is also the case with the Santāls. But, as already mentioned, they have at a certain time (probably in our 15th century) deliberately discarded some old social customs and adopted new ones, doubtlessly under Hindu influence, and got some Aryan social customs altered to suit their convenience. I should not be surprised to find that they have at some time had regular Hindu teachers. Still a great many of the original customs are preserved, and the handling of the adopted ones also is original. It is quite true that many of their customs point to the east, much further even than Assam, and others perhaps to the north. The matter has, however, not been sufficiently investigated as yet to give us a right to base more than hypothesis on what we know.

“Another source of knowledge is the language, and a careful study yields wonderful results and brings to light unimpeachable facts. The Santāl language has a pure non-Aryan skeleton, with very few exceptions a pure grammar, and an often rich vocabulary of words denoting everything which can in any way be observed with the senses, names of the body and parts of it, etc., in short, all which is their own by nature. But when it comes to words which denote most things that appertain to civilization, complex states of mind, abstract thought, etc., or names for social functions and relations brought about by marriage, not to mention law terms, we find most of them have been borrowed from their neighbours. All these additions with very few exceptions are of Aryan origin, and belong to one or other of the Aryan vernaculars of North India. The most recent additions come

from Bengal, or even Assam, being importations by returned tea garden coolies; previous to that we have appropriations from Bihāri and other forms of Hindi. A good many words must have been borrowed far to the west; their peculiar form is a sure sign that the ancestors of the Santāls must have been living much further west than Chotā Nāgpur.

“On the other hand, there are a few linguistic features in the Santāl language which may perhaps find an explanation in trans-Himalayan languages. As far as I know, some phonetic peculiarities of the Santāl and other Mundā languages are not found further west than the present habitat of these races, but are, on the contrary, met with eastwards. The linguistic relatives of the Santāls are at present to be found to the east, specially in Southern Burma and on the Malay Peninsula (Mon-Khmer and other languages); and a conviction is gradually establishing itself that these peoples belong to a large race living now eastwards so far as the Pacific islands, and having their westernmost ‘friends’ in India. It is not as yet more than a hypothesis; but what is known distinctly points in that direction. There is, of course, a possibility that what is found common in all their languages is borrowed from a now unknown common source.

“We then come to the anthropological question. The Santāls have been classified as belonging to the Dravidian race, and this classification has been based on anthropological measures; linguistically there is absolutely no connection between the two, except a few words borrowed. The features are very much alike, and the anthropological measurements give very similar results. But a good many races in this world would in that case have to be classified as Dravidians. Both may have a common origin in the unknown past; but apart from these measurements we know nothing to connect the races with any certainty. Besides, the Dravidian type, although the prevalent one, is by no means the only one found. Several Aryan types are met with, and a Mongoloid one is not very uncommon. Other types may be found, but too few to be taken into account. All this proves mixture of blood at some time or other. What I would especially draw attention to in this connection is the Mongoloid type, and types resembling what is found in Assam, Burma and further on. To obtain sure results, however, it is necessary to have exact measurements of all types, not only of the Dravidian one. There is a possibility that they may have been a Dravidian tribe, which for some reason or other gave up their old language and adopted a new one; we find instances of a similar nature even among the

Kharwarian tribes. But there is no trace of this having happened, and I think it is safest to await further investigations before adopting such a theory.

"Finally, we have what outsiders have recorded and connecting points in the history of other better known races. There is not much more than what is mentioned in Sir H. H. Risley's excellent work (*Tribes and Castes of Bengal*), and what has been recorded here further down in this chapter. It all refers to a recent or comparatively recent time. I think it may be ascertained that the ancestors of these races were living west of Benâres about the commencement of our era—I am accepting the theory that the Cheros originally belonged to the Kharwârs. The fact that the *Rāmāyana* tells us about the help of Hanumân should not be overlooked, but be compared with the statement of the traditions that the Kharwârs helped Rama.

"When all this is summed up, the result is rather meagre. We may be fairly sure that the ancestors of the race to which the Santâls belong were living on the Chota Nâgpur plateau about six hundred years ago, and that they had at that time been living there for many generations. Their traditions and their language make it likely that they have reached this place from the west (south-west); and it is not improbable that about two thousand years ago they were on both sides of the Ganges west of Benâres.

"If we are to accept the traditions of the people these either affirm or presuppose that, since the time when the human race was split up into nations, they have always been wandering in a more or less easterly direction—a direction which now-a-days also is followed by them in all their migrations. This would imply that they came into India from the north-west. I must confess that I personally was long of this opinion, and I have not given it up altogether; but I am more and more getting my eyes opened to the fact that the Santâl and Mundâ peoples have their connections towards the east. It is possible that the Santâls and other Mundâ tribes have come from the east into India, that they at first advanced far to the west, and that after some time they were forced by the invading Aryans to retrace their steps; but it is also just as possible that they are the last remnants and laggards of a race which came from the west and has spread to the east and south. As far as I can see, it is not possible to pronounce a more definite opinion at present."

Whatever may have been the original habitat of the race, <sup>THE</sup> there is no doubt that within historic times they were settled in <sup>SANTAL</sup> the Chota Nâgpur plateau and in the adjoining districts of <sup>ADVANCE.</sup>



Midnapore and Singhbhūm, and that they began to make their way northwards towards the close of the 18th century. The earliest mention of them appears to be contained in an article entitled "Some Extraordinary Facts, Customs and Practices of the Hindus" by Lord Teignmouth (Sir John Shore), which was published in the Asiatic Researches of 1795. In this article, they were designated "Soontars" and described as a rude unlettered tribe residing in Ramgur (Rāmgarh', the least civilized part of the Company's possessions, who have reduced the detection and trial of persons suspected of witchcraft to a system." The first mention of the Santāls in this district occurs in Montgomery Martin's *Eastern India* (compiled from Buchanan Hamilton's manuscripts), which contains two references to them, in one of which their name is spelt "Saungtar," while in the other a printer's error has converted it to "Taungtar." The first is:—"It is only in Lakerdewani that some impure Taungtars have been permitted to work the cow, and the most violent opposition was at first made to such an atrocious innovation; but the obstinacy of the barbarians prevailed, chiefly, I believe, because they were thought powerful in witchcraft, and because disputes with such people were considered as dangerous" The second is:—"The tenants of Behār in general transact their own business with the agents of the zamindārs, and it is only among the rude tribe called Saungtar, and in the Bengalese parts of the district that a kind of chief tenant is employed to transact the whole affairs of the community." These passages, as Mr. H. McPherson, I.C.S., points out, are interesting as they illustrate three peculiarities of the Santāls, viz., their contempt of Hindu prejudices, their superstitious belief in witchcraft, and their communal system, all of which survive in undiminished strength to the present day.

Further information about the Santāls at this early time has been obtained by Mr. McPherson from the unpublished manuscripts of Buchanan Hamilton, in which it is stated:—"The Saungtars are a tribe that has a peculiar language. So far as I could learn, about 500 families are now settled in the wilder parts of the district. This, however, is a late event, and they came last from Bīrbhūm in consequence of the annoyance which they received from its zamindārs. The original seat of this tribe, as far as I could learn from them, is Palāmau and Rāmgarh. They are very expert in clearing forests and bringing them into cultivation, but seldom endure to pay any considerable rent, and whenever the land has been brought into full cultivation and the customary rent is demanded, they retire to the wastes

belonging to some other zamindārs. A whole village always moves at once, and their headman (*mān̄jhi*) makes a bargain with the new landlord for the whole, agreeing to pay a certain sum for as much land as they can cultivate. At first they pay a trifle, but this is annually increased until the full sum becomes due. If any attempt is made to take more from any individual the whole run off. The *mān̄jhi* levies the assessment on the individuals according to the stock which each possesses. The office of *mān̄jhi* is considered hereditary; but if the people of a village are discontented they apply to the zamindār and say that they will no longer pay their rents through such a man, but wish to have such another person appointed their *mān̄jhi*. There is no distinction of family rank between the *mān̄jis* and their inferiors—all eat in company and intermarry." Buchanan Hamilton then proceeds to give an account of their religious beliefs, which need not be quoted here.

The first extract given above will be sufficient to show that by the end of the first decade of the 19th century the Santāls had settled in considerable numbers in Lakerdwani, *i.e.*, Handwe and Belpaita, two tracts lying outside the hills. They had made their way there from Birbhūm, where they appear to have been brought in to clear the country. According to Sir William Hunter:—"The Permanent Settlement for the land tax in 1790 resulted in a general extension of tillage, and the Santāls were hired to rid the lowlands of the wild beasts which, since the great famine of 1769, had everywhere encroached upon the margin of cultivation. This circumstance was so noticeable as to find its way into the London papers, and from 1792 a new era in the history of the Santāl dates."\* By 1818 the Santāls had made their way further north into the forests below the hills in the Goddā subdivision, and even into the Dāmin-i-koh; for Mr. Sutherland, writing in that year, noticed their presence in *tappas* Dhamsui and Jamni Harnipur and also in *tappa* Saruni of *pargana* Handwe, and in *tappas* Marpal and Daurpal, which are included in the Dumkā portion of the Dāmin-i-koh. By 1827 the Santāls had got as far as the extreme north of the Goddā subdivision, Mr. Ward when demarcating the Dāmin-i-koh finding three Santāl villages in Pātsundā and 27 villages in Barkop. His first impressions of the Santāls are interesting. "There are," he wrote, "within this described line two or three villages established by the race of people called Santars.\* These people are natives of the Singbhoom and adjacent country; their habits and customs

are singular; they are of no caste, extremely hardy and industrious, and are upon the whole considered an extraordinary race of beings. They emigrate from their own country to those districts which are known to abound most in forests, and where they are welcomed by the zamindars, who invite them to settle. From choice they select the most wild spots, and so great is their predilection for the wildest places, that they are seldom known to remain at one station longer than it takes to clear and bring it into cultivation. They take 'pattahs' from the zamindars, the terms of which are generally one rupee per annum for every plough used and the 'nuzzer' of a kid. They are quiet and peaceably disposed, and so much liked by the zamindars for the great use they are of in clearing forest lands, where from the nature of the climate others could not be established, that they generally meet with the best treatment."

It will be noticed that in the above extract Mr. Ward referred to Singhbhūm as the place of origin of the Santāl immigrants he met, and from depositions which he took it appears that they had left and were still leaving Singhbhūm because of disturbances there.\* The part of Singhbhūm, from which they migrated was probably Dhalbhūm, in which the Santāls are still very numerous, and its neighbourhood. It is not known what were the disturbances alluded to, but the account of the Santāls in Midnapore, of which Dhalbhūm then formed part, given (in 1820) in Hamilton's *Hindustan* may help to explain the circumstances which would lead them to emigrate. "Some parts of these jungles are occupied by a poor miserable proscribed race of men called Sontals, despised on account of their low caste by the inhabitants of the plain country, who would on no account allow any one of them to fix himself in their villages. The peasantry in the vicinity, by way of distinction, call themselves good creditable people, while they scarcely admit the Sontals within the pale of humanity; yet the latter are a mild, sober, industrious people, and remarkable for sincerity and good faith. The zamindars give them no leases, yet on the whole treat them well; for such is their timidity that they fly on the least oppression, and are no more heard of. Notwithstanding they hold their lands on such easy terms, and scarcely ever have their verbal tenures violated, they are said to be naked, half-starved, and apparently in the lowest stage of human misery; a result we should not have expected from the character above assigned them. Their villages are generally situated between the cultivated plains and the thick jungles, in order that they may protect the crops of their more

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\* W. B. Oldham, *Ethnical Aspects of the Burdwan District*, §. xxi.

fortunate neighbours from deer and wild swine. In some instances they have been known to till their lands with considerable success, and raise good crops of rice and collie (*kaldi*); but all that their vigilance can preserve from the ravages of wild beasts is extorted from them by the rapacity of the money-lenders. To these miscreants the Santals, who have but a slender knowledge of the value of money, pay interest at the rate of 100 per cent. for their food, and nearly 150 per centum for their seed; so that when their crops are ready, little or nothing remains for themselves."

Buchanan Hamilton's information was that disputes with the Bīrbhūm zamīndārs drove the Santāls into Handwe and Belpatta, and the date of their settlement there may be placed between 1790 and 1810. It was probably a later influx (between 1815 and 1830) which brought the tribe to the notice of Mr. Sutherland in 1816 and of Mr. Ward, the demarcator of the Dāmin-i-koh, between 1826 and 1833. These pioneers were soon followed by large numbers of their tribesmen, who between 1836 and 1851 flocked into the Dāmin-i-koh, where they cleared the jungle and received land on easy terms. According to Captain Sherwill, there were no less than 83,265 Santāls in the Dāmin-i-koh alone in 1851.

The marginal table shows their strength in the whole district at each census except that of 1881, when the figure returned (9,148) was obviously incorrect. The total number of Santāls in other parts of Bengal and Eastern Bengal is 1,166,672, and they are most numerous in Mānbhūm (194,730), Midnapore (148,251) and Bānkurā (105,682).

The name Santāl, spelt in one way or another (*e g*, Sonthal), is an English form adopted from Hindī, which corresponds with the form Saontār used by the Bengali-speaking peoples. Both names are only applied to the tribe by non-Santāls, and the Santāls do not use them in speaking about themselves except as a concession to foreigners; then they prefer the form Saontār. Both Santāl and Saontār have the same origin, according to phonetic law and practice in the different languages. The Santāls themselves state that they got this name through foreigners commencing to call them so whilst and because they were living in Saont (Sant, as they pronounce the name of the country), which has been identified with the modern Sildā *pargana* in the Midnapore District. Etymologically there is nothing against this, *āl* being a suffix used in Hindī and other Aryan languages to form possessional adjectives from substantives, and *ār* doing the same for the Bengali word.

ORIGIN  
OF NAME.

Mr. W. B. Oldham, C.I.E., is of opinion that the name is an abbreviation of Samantawālā. Samanta, he says, is another name given to the Silda *pargana*, whence the immigrant Santāls discovered by Mr. Ward in 1828 deposed that they had come. "As in Bengal all trans-frontier Pathāns, even if Khorāsani or Baluch, are called Kābuli, or as in the Santāl Parganas all Hindustani money-lenders, even Mārwaris, are called Bhojpurī, because the first and most conspicuous of their kind came from Bhojpur in Shāhābād, so would so remarkable a people as the Santāls on their first appearance in Burdwān and Birbhūm be called after the place whence some of them were known to have come." In regard to this latter theory it may be mentioned that the Silda *pargana* is known locally as Samantabhui, but by the Santāls (who elide the *m*) as Santbhui, the tradition being that the country was so called because it was conquered by a Samanta Rajā, *i.e.*, a general of the Emperor of Delhi. There are, moreover, signs of a fairly old Santal settlement in the *pargana*, and round about it a dense population of Santāls accounting for over one-third of the inhabitants. There is also a tract called Samantabhūm or Santbhūm in the Bānkurā District, which the Santāls claim to have colonized, and legend relates that it was held by 12 Samanta brothers, a number which will recall the 12 Santāl sects.

Regarding these theories Mr. Bodding writes:—"That Sant and Saont are to be derived from the (originally Sanskrit) word Samanta seems to be very probable. As a matter of fact all the forms (Sant, Saont, Saot and Sat) are easily derivable from this according to common Aryan phonetic laws. There is no doubt that the word itself is of Aryan origin. If a translation of the word is sought, the original meaning would be something like "bordermen," but as they have probably got the name in the way mentioned, the meaning implied by the users of the word would not be that; they are 'Saonters'."

The Santāls call themselves simply Har, meaning man, and state that they were formerly called Kharwār. As a rule, if asked their name and caste by a stranger, they reply Mānjhi.

**PHYSICAL  
CHARACTERISTICS.**

The Santāl is a man of medium stature, but muscular and sturdily built, wiry and capable of great physical endurance. His complexion is dark, varying from brown to an almost jet black colour. The latter is very rare, while a light-brown complexion is by no means infrequent, and would be much oftener in evidence, if the Santāl did not expose his body to sun and air as he does: the Mongoloid types are generally fair coloured. He is beardless or nearly so, but has coarse and sometimes curly hair on the pate.

It was formerly the custom for all Santals to wear long hair gathered together in a knot, but now-a-days it is very seldom that one sees a man with long hair; if it is long, there is generally a small comb fixed on the left side. The cheek bones are somewhat prominent, the nose is generally broad and depressed, the mouth is large, and the lips are full and projecting. According to Sir Herbert Risley:—"In point of physical characteristics the Santals may be regarded as typical examples of the pure Dravidian stock. The proportions of the skull, approaching the dolichocephalic type, conclusively refute the hypothesis of their Mongoloid descent." Faces of a Mongoloid type are, however, sometimes seen; and Mr. Bodding has observed spots in the pigment of the skin of Santal children, which, in size, position and colour, resemble certain peculiar blue spots found on Mongol children, which are said to be a distinct race-mark not found outside the Mongolian peoples.\* He remarks:—"The theory of Mongolian descent is not tenable, but there cannot be any doubt that Mongolian blood has been introduced, either by Santals taking Mongolian wives, or Santal women having illegitimate children by Mongolian men. I have no doubt that a good many of the Aryan types among the present-day Santals are caused by Santal women having illicit intercourse with Aryans. The Santals are not what they were in this respect."

In the work of reclaiming land and clearing new jungle the Santals have few equals in India, but, as a rule, they care little for cultivating in flat lowland tracts. A country denuded of forests does not attract them; and, writes Colonel Dalton, "when, through their own labour the spread of cultivation has effected this denudation, they select a new site, however prosperous they may have been on the old, and retire into the backwoods, where their harmonious flutes sound sweeter, their drums find deeper echoes, and their bows and arrows may once more be utilized." This roving spirit is not so marked now, probably owing to the security given by the settlement, and Santals in this district cling tenaciously to their lands. The rapid increase of their numbers and also, perhaps, in part, their indebtedness still force them, however, to emigrate in large numbers. •

GENERAL  
CHARAC-  
TERISTICS.

As regards the quality of their cultivation, a few, and those only who live in the vicinity of Hindu agricultural villages, have learnt to take proper care of their lands. For instance, they will not, as a rule, weed or manure their paddy fields.

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*Mongolian Race-marks among the Santals.* J.A.S. B., 1904, Part III, p. 26.

The only bit of land they manure is the *barge*, i.e., a plot of land as a rule adjoining the house-site, where they grow Indian corn. The Santāls are gradually becoming better cultivators as they become more settled, but they are still somewhat happy-go-lucky in their habits. They love a roaming life with hunting and fishing, with pleasures of sorts and the least possible labour except when the work has in a way become an acquired instinct. The paddy fields and outlying upland fields (called second-class *bāri* land) are used only for one crop; from their *barges* they generally gather two; otherwise their fields lie fallow for six to eight months of the year.

Socially, they are a jolly, cheerful people, contented with their lot, so long as they have enough to eat and drink, and to spend on religious and social ceremonies. "As he is unfettered with caste, the Santāl enjoys existence in a far greater degree than does his neighbour, the priest-ridden and caste-crushed Hindu. The Santāl eats his buffalo-beef, his kids, poultry, pork or pigeons, enjoys a hearty carouse enlivened with the spirit *pachwai*, and dances with his wives and comrades to express his joy and thankfulness."\* Hard drinking is a peculiar failure of the Santāls, who enjoy nothing so much as a carouse; but so far the physique of the race does not seem to be impaired. Their fondness for drink may be gathered from the attitude of an old Mānjhi, who asked whether the God of the Christians would allow old people to get drunk twice a week. When he heard the horrified answer of the missionary, he simply replied: "Then teach our boys and girls, but leave us alone." Rice is their chief food, but they are able to live on all sorts of roots and vegetables; when food is scarce, they will have recourse to other fare. They will, for instance, eat two kinds of snake (the *dhāmin* and rock-snake), a few kinds of rats, one kind of frog, one lizard, etc. The lizard is considered excellent eating; but the rest are generally only partaken of by children, especially shepherd boys. Though living mostly on vegetables they enjoy animal food when they can get it, and nothing so much as pig curry. Except at certain sacrifices, they never eat cows, bullocks or buffaloes, unless they die from disease or have to be killed because they have broken a leg, etc.; or are too old to be used as draught cattle. They rather enjoy chewing the tough meat, but certain kinds of meat they abhor, e.g., horse-flesh.

Their food may be divided into two main classes, viz.,  
(1) cereals, prepared as *bhāt*, with curry of some kind added, and

\* W. S. Sherwill, *A Tour through the Rajmahal Hills*, J. A. S. B., 1851.

(2) other food eaten raw or roasted, but without cereals. A list prepared by Mr. Bodding gives the following details:—Cereals (19 kinds) besides a large number of varieties of rice; vegetable curries composed of (a) leguminous plants (14), (b) cultivated vegetables (18) and (c) leaves of wild plants and trees (59); mushrooms (24); resins (10); fruits (wild or cultivated) (65); tubers (25); all domestic animals, except dogs, horses and cats, and wild animals including tigers, leopards, jackals, foxes, five kinds of rats, etc., (30); snakes (2); lizards (1); tortoises and crocodiles (6); birds, with the eggs of every bird eaten (72); fishes (at least 30); wild grains, fruits, etc., eaten during times of scarcity (21); oil-seeds and kernels (16); and the ordinary Indian spices. A gourmand could not wish for more miscellaneous material, and it is not certain that the list is quite complete.

As will be mentioned later, it is probable that the social system of the Santals was originally communistic; and if their traditions are to be believed, they were formerly a self-contained nation having very few social relations with other races. It is possible to trace, even at the present time, a distinct idea among them that a Santal has a right to possess and appropriate any part of nature not previously in the occupation of anybody else. Land is common property till it has been held under a title, or, at least, "trampled round." All forests and forest produce are considered free to all, if they have not been definitely occupied by others. Any wild animal is also lawful prey, but belongs to the man who first wounded it, not to the man who kills it, although the latter and the village headman get portions of the animal as determined by custom. River fish belong to anybody, and if a man dams up a watercourse or has a natural pond, he does not enjoy the fish alone, but on some day or other invites the villagers and neighbours to catch all the fish there. They give the owner of the water-course a small share, and the bigger fish are also divided; the idea of public property is thus apparent. This does not of course apply in the case of fish stocked in a tank, a very recent innovation with the Santals. As soon as anyone takes possession of anything with the consent of the village, he is treated as the owner.

It is possible that the same feeling may partially explain the sexual relations of the people. As long as the girls are not owned by anybody, it does not much concern anyone what is done with them or what they do as long as they are not "spoilt." But if they are anybody's property, it is different. If anything goes wrong, it is the male who suffers; the female is regarded more or less as a domestic animal—formerly she might even be killed. It



is a curious fact that the adulterer is called a thief in their legal phraseology; further, that the people say that in olden times theft was unknown among the people, the only exception being that they might occasionally kill and eat by stealth a stray goat or sheep. They have, they say, learnt to steal and to lie from the Hindu cats, as they call them.

Under such conditions it will easily be understood that the Santals in the old days did not and could not have any regular business transactions among themselves or with outsiders. They did not use money, and did not buy or sell, but bartered. They grew or made or found what they needed. They manufactured their own salt, wove their own cloths, and made their weapons, implements and utensils. If any one wanted a cow or a wife, they were obtained by barter. The old *gurus* say that the Baske sept started a kind of bartering business; and it is curious that to this day a mixed mustard oil, used for culinary purposes, is never called anything else than "barter oil."

As the forests have been thinned and the Santals have come into contact with other races, their circumstances have greatly altered. They have got money, although they do not as yet understand its value. It may almost be said that they know the worth of a pice, but not yet of a rupee. They hanker after the fineries of others, and will give away their substance to obtain them. Under the influence of Hindu caste ideas they are gradually developing into a kind of cultivator caste, whose real occupation is agriculture of an inferior kind, and whose leisure time is spent in idleness. There is no doubt that the Santals are not as yet equipped to take up the struggle with outsiders; if they are not helped, they will go to the wall. Their ideals are in the past, not in the future; and another great drawback is that they are hable to hopelessness as to their future as a people. But let them see a thing succeed, and they are quick enough to adopt it. The Santals are at the same time rigid formalists. They do not go outside the old forms and regard any omission or aberration therefrom as serious faults. This love of ceremonial formalism is another obstacle to their development. As to personal characteristics, the Santals are easy-going and, on the whole, easily contented. The most frequent causes of strife are, on the one hand, land disputes and sexual relations, and, on the other, their belief in witchcraft. The men are more peaceable than the women, who, besides having a quicker wit and a more fluent tongue, know very well that if a man complains against his wife, he has to pay any fine that may be imposed.

Generally speaking the Santals, with their reckless gaiety, their bluntness and simple honesty, and their undoubted zest for all out-door amusements and particularly for hunting, are a very attractive race to an officer accustomed to deal with other races in Bengal. They are, on the whole, truthful, law-abiding and honest people; their word is their bond, and a knot on a string is as good as a receipt. Their manners are straightforward, simple and independent, and the women in particular show a certain native freedom, without, however, being bold or brazen. An amusing instance of this freedom has been quoted. On every market day a number of Santal women used to frequent the garden of a former Assistant Commissioner, plucking his flowers and making themselves quite at home. They would then walk into his house and deck themselves before the looking-glass in his dressing-room, thinking no evil and fearing none. The Santals are, however, not industrious, and if anything contrary to custom and habit is required, or if they suspect that evil spirits are at work, they do not display much endurance. Cases, for instance, are known of people attacked by fever dying in a very short time through fear. Their food and exposed life may account for much, but it seems to be a fact that they have not the power of resisting disease that Europeans possess, and old people are comparatively few.

The Santals have a large number of different dances and, with DANCES. two or three exceptions, these are very decent to look at; but excluding a couple of war-dances, the associations of the dance are always doubtful. Except at festivals they never dance during the daytime, but at night; and the dances give the two sexes an opportunity for illicit intercourse. In the Santal mind, therefore, dancing is always associated with sensuality. "It often happens," writes Mr. Bodding, "that Europeans who have no idea of this, and who enjoy the plastic movements of the people, call for Santals to dance before them. I believe it would be wise to leave this item out of entertainments, because the people, as a matter of fact, draw the conclusion that, when a European wants to have such an exhibition, the cause is that he has inclinations in the same direction as the Santals. This does not advance the British prestige. To give another example. It has been customary at a certain *melâ* to have races for Santal women. With the way in which a Santal woman puts on her cloth it is unavoidable that when running she is partially uncovered. I have heard of a case where the husband divorced his wife because at such a *melâ* she exposed herself running and ran against his special wish."

INTERNAL  
STRUC-  
TURE.

The tradition of the Santāls is that the parents of mankind were Pilohū Harām and Pilohū Budhi, who sprung from two eggs laid by a wild gander and goose. *Pilohū*, it may be explained, means "original;" *harām*, an old or elderly man, or a married man; and *budhi*, an old woman or a married woman; while *harām budhi* is used to denote a married couple, or a pair living together as husband and wife, except those recently married. The traditional names do not mean more than that the human race sprung from one pair, hatched from two eggs laid by a pair of swans or geese. *Hāns* is the name for the gander, *hasil* for the goose; but the words, which are of Aryan origin, may also mean swans. This first pair had seven boys and seven girls; the names of about half of these are mentioned in the traditions, and are also probably of Aryan origin. When they were married and had children, the seven parents (and the grand-parents) decided that henceforth brothers and sisters should not marry. They therefore divided themselves into seven exogamous septs, called (1) Hānsdak, (2) Murmū, (3) Kiskū, (4) Hembrom, (5) Marndī, (6) Saren and (7) Tudū. When the first race was exterminated in Khoj-kamān, only one righteous pair being saved in the cave of Harata, the new race which sprang from this pair was again divided into seven exogamous septs with the same names as the original septs, to which five more were added, viz., Baske, Besrā, Paunriā, Chore and Bedeā: the last sept has been lost. These names are all sept names, not *nomina propria*.

There is a diffuse kind of traditional story relating how the sept names were given after a big hunt, but they are really totemistic in origin. Each sept (*pāris*) has a pass-word peculiar to itself and is divided into a number of sub-septs (*khunt*). No Santāl may marry within his father's sept or any of its sub-septs, or into his mother's sub-sept; but he may marry into her sept, a Santāl proverb saying—"No one heeds a cow track or his mother's sept." The pass-words, which specially belong to the original septs (*nij-Hānsdak*, *nij-Murmū*, etc.) and frequently are unknown to other sub-septs, are generally names of ancestors, chiefs or other important persons or places, forts, etc. They refer to places and persons in Champā, and are thus of no very great antiquity.

COMMU-  
NAL  
SYSTEM.

The basis of the Santāl communal system is the village. A Santāl will never settle alone in an uncultivated area; when they have found a place, which by a curious mixture of common sense and superstition (*e.g.*, omens) they judge to be good, they go there in a body and settle with a leader and his assistants. The

first leader becomes the village headman, the others his subordinate officers. The village headman (*mānjhi*) is *primus inter pares*, being chosen by the village people to administer the rights, rules and ceremonies of the Santāl village community. No public sacrifice, no festival, no ceremony, such as a marriage—in short, nothing of a public character—can be properly done without the *mānjhi* participating or taking the initiative. If a village has got a headman of another race as a *pradhān*, the Santal will have for themselves an official called *hāndi mānjhi*, i.e., literally a “liquor chief,” who performs all the duties of a Santal village chief except collecting rent and doing work demanded by Government or landlord. Everything of a ceremonial kind is ratified by *hāndi*.

The headman is the representative of the village both in its external and internal relations. For his trouble he gets the honour of the post and some material advantages, which formerly included rent-free land, certain portions of the animals killed in sacrifice, etc. If there is anything affecting the village interests, he calls the villagers together to discuss and settle it; or he may summon them to sit in judgment if a villager has complained to him. The village is here represented by the *more hor* (literally five men), a term which probably originally signified the headman and the four other village officials, but now always includes any adult male belonging to the village. They try as far as possible to settle all internal disputes, and it is considered very “bad form” for anybody to take a case outside the village boundary. With proper control the system works well; for though the Santāls take an unconscionably long time over a case, they end as a rule in doing justice.

If there is any dispute with anyone belonging to another village, the people of both villages meet together and try to decide the case. If they cannot manage to do this, or if one or both of the parties are dissatisfied, they can, or rather could, appeal to the *pargana*, who is the head of a number of villages and generally also a village headman. When he sits in full bench to do judgment, his *panchāyat* consists of the village headmen of his circle and other influential men in the neighbourhood—in fact, any male adult belonging to the place may be present. The *pargana* pronounces judgment, as also does the *mānjhi*, but they will not, as a rule, do so without first being sure of having a majority for their verdict. As the *mānjhi* has an assistant in the village, so the *pargana* has an assistant in his circle called the *des-mānjhi*. The traditional perquisites of a *pargana* are one rupee, half a seer of *ghi* and four scores of Indian-corn cobs annually from each

village under him; those of the *des-mānjhi* half this amount. Both have, as a matter of duty, to give a feast to the village chiefs when these things are paid to them. The village *panchayat* system works very well among the Santāls; the same cannot be said about the *parganas*, many of whom abuse their position.

Above the village headmen and the *parganas* are the people themselves. During the hot weather the Santāls have big hunts, in which every male who can possibly get away will try to participate. The convener of the hunt is called *dihri*, a Pahāria word used by them for priest.\* The *dihri* is a common Santāl who acts as the priest, sacrificer and master of the hunt. He sends round word by means of a *sāl* branch, notifying the date and place of the hunt and also the place where the people are to spend the night. They reach this spot at sunset, after the hunt is over, cook their food, etc., and then take up, under the presidency of the *dihri*, any matter which may be brought before the people in council assembled. Here the *mānjhis* and *parganas* are, if necessary, brought to justice; and if any one has to be excommunicated, his case is dealt with. Any matter, great or small, may be brought forward by anyone; if a case cannot be finally decided, it is kept in abeyance till next year's hunt.

The people themselves are the final authority; the officials are only their representatives appointed to perform certain duties, to keep order and to represent them generally. Custom has made these positions practically hereditary, and has also established a kind of ownership in land. But there are many traces of the communal system, of which two may be mentioned. In Māgh (January-February) the village people gather together after a sacrifice; the headman, taking the lead, resigns his post to the village people; all the other officials also resign their posts to one another as representing the village, and the villagers surrender their land to the headman, saying that they will keep only their old house-sites and their huts—a figurative expression for their wives and their own bodies, connoting personal freedom. After a few days everything is *pro forma* given and taken back again. Again, if a man leaves his village, he cannot, for instance, sell his house, for the timber of it belongs to the village; he cannot sell his land to outsiders, for it has to be taken up by a fellow-villager.

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\* Cf. the Khond *dehuri*. This is a curious resemblance, and it is not the only one. A sub-sept of the Santāls, called Bunu-beret-Marndi, have a peculiar sub-sept sacrifice, which has many points of resemblance with the old Khond human sacrifice, but the Santāls sacrifice a cock.

In the Dāmin-i-koh the *parganas* (also called *parganaits*, though the latter is not a Santālī word) have an official position, the area within the jurisdiction of each forming the administrative unit or revenue division known as a "Bungalow." They are appointed by Government, and through them the *mānjhis* or village headmen pay their rents and deal with Government, the *parganas* being remunerated by a commission of 2 per cent. on the collections of the *mānjhis* subordinate to them. They are generally responsible for the good behaviour of the latter and for the punctual payment of rent, and are also bound to see that crimes are reported, and that roads, embankments, boundary pillars and staging bungalows are kept in proper repair. Under them, in the Dāmin-i-koh, are *des mānjhis*, who are their assistants, and *chaklādars*, who act as their messengers. Outside the Dāmin there are no *parganas* left; in their stead some so-called *sardars* have been appointed. The latter discharge some of the duties of police officers, having a number of village *chaukidars* under them, and perform much of the judicial work formerly transacted by the *parganas*. Government officials frequently send them cases regarding social matters, land disputes, etc., for investigation and report. There are then three judges, one for the complainant, one for the accused and one for Government, who are always men of some social position. This court is called *sālis*, and its decisions are popularly regarded as subject to no appeal.

The *mānjhi* is also recognized officially. He is not only the fiscal head of the village collecting the rents but is its police officer, being bound to report crimes. Through him the villagers, as a body, deal with the proprietor, the latter being merely a rent-receiver, who has properly no part in the internal economy of the village, though he frequently makes his proprietary rights felt. In virtue of his office the *mānjhi* is, in the Dāmin-i-koh, given by Government a commission of 8 per cent. of the collections, while in the zamīndāri estates he retains  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of them, viz., one anna in the rupee from the ryots and another from the zamīndār. He is appointed by the Deputy Commissioner with the consent of the villagers and may be dismissed by him for misconduct; otherwise the office is by custom hereditary, descending from father to son, except where the son is palpably unfit. According to the Santāl institutions, the *mānjhi* is chosen by the villagers, and if they are dissatisfied they can get him dismissed and another man installed. At the present day the Deputy Commissioner has the right to appoint and dismiss; but it is only in exceptional cases that he will act counter to the wishes of the village people.

The headman is not always known simply as a *mānjhi*, but also as *pradhān* and *mustājir*. These three names are due to a difference of origin. The *mānjhi* was the head ryot of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal community, who had social as well as official functions to perform. The *mustājir* was the person to whom a proprietor leased a cultivated village or a piece of jungle for reclamation on *ijāra* or *thikā*, i.e., at a rent fixed for a term of years with the right to collect what he could from the ryots. Such a *mustājir* might be foreign to the rest of community or be an ordinary aboriginal headman. The title *pradhān* is a modern one used for all village headmen in the settlement records.

In his official capacity the *mānjhi* is assisted by a sub-headman called a *pārānik*, the Santal form of *parāmanik*. The *pārānik* is the principal assistant and representative of the *mānjhi*, by whom he is originally chosen, i.e., when a village is founded. If the *mānjhi* should abscond or die having no male issue or brothers in the village, the old rule is that the *pārānik* should be *mānjhi*. In his social functions the *mānjhi* is assisted by the *jog-mānjhi*, who acts as *custos morum* to the young people of the village, as the name implies, *jog* being of Sanskrit derivation and meaning practically *mores*. His duty is not to prevent sexual intercourse between the two sexes when unmarried (except when they are non-marrigeable relatives), but to see that no scandal arises. If a girl becomes pregnant, the *jog-mānjhi* has to find out who is responsible. If he does not, the village people take him to the *mānjhi*'s cow-shed and tie him with a buffalo's rope to a pole, scold him and also fine him. If he knows the young man, he brings him before the *ṣaṇchāyat*, who will deal with the culprit. During the *Sohrāe* festival the village boys and girls live for five days and nights with the *jog-mānjhi*, who is responsible for their behaviour. At the birth of a child and at marriages he is master of the ceremonies; he is also in a way responsible when the village youths attend certain night festivals which are always accompanied by revelry. Formerly the *jog-mānjhi* was stricter and had a very important position in the village. Now-a-days he has less authority, but the young people still use him as a safe depository of their secrets. If a girl has a liaison, she may, as a precaution, tell the *jog-mānjhi* of it in confidence and give him *handi* to purchase his silence. The young men also try to bribe him. The *jog-mānjhi* has an assistant called *jog-pārānik*, who officiates when he is absent.

The last secular village official is the *gorait*, or he is styled by the Santals the *godai* who acts

the *mānjhi's* orderly, calls the villagers together at his command, and also collects sacrificial fowls for the village sacrifices. The *godet* has a peculiar reputation among the Santāls, because he is prone to misuse his position for his own benefit. They call him *marang mānjhi*, i.e., the great chief, and there are many instances of *godets* having ousted a *mānjhi* or even a *pargana*. If a *pārānik* becomes *mānjhi*, it is considered proper that the *godet* should become *pārānk*. The *naeke* is the village priest who performs all the public sacrifices to the national godlings; and the *kudām naeke* (*kudām* means the back of a thing) is a subsidiary officer. Whenever the *naeke* performs a sacrifice, the *kudām naeke* has to offer rice dipped in his own blood (drawn by pricking with a thorn) to Pargana Bonga and the boundary *bongas*. He does the same when the villagers go hunting, in order to bring them luck and to ensure their safe return. This double set of village priests may perhaps point to different origin.

Every village official formerly held some land rent-free (*mān*), its area varying with the importance of the official and the size of the village. The *mānjhi* had four shares, the *pārānik* three shares, the *jog-mānjhi* two shares, and all others one share. The *mānjhi's* *mān* land was originally half a *rek* of rice land with a corresponding amount of higher land, about sufficient for one plough. It has now been assessed to rent, but is held by the *pradhān* as such, i.e., by virtue of his position. If land is sold for arrears of rent the *mān* land cannot be sold, and when a man ceases to be *mānjhi* it passes to his successor, not his heirs. The *mān* land is now a kind of security for the *zamindār*, ensuring the realization of his rents.

The *panchāyat* or committee of village elders is a cherished *Panchāyat* institution among the Santāls. The indigenous officials of a Santāl village described above are *ex-officio* members of the *panchāyat*; and every village has its council place (the *mānjhi thān*) where they assemble to discuss the affairs of the village and its inhabitants. All petty disputes, both of a civil and criminal nature, are settled there, but if the matter to be settled is of an immoral and shameful character, they go to the end of the village street or some other convenient place where they need not fear hurting the feelings of their womenkind. Those that are of too weighty a nature to be decided by the village assembly are referred to a *panchāyat* consisting of five neighbouring *mānjhis* under the control of the *parganāit*. If this special council is unable to decide any matter, it is brought to the notice of a Government officer, but this is not



the old custom. The *panchāyat* also disposes of all disputed social questions, such as disputes about marriage and inheritance, and punishes the guilty. This system of self-government constitutes a fair bond of union amongst the Santāls, who look with great suspicion on any measure calculated to destroy it.

OUTCAST-  
ING.

For the excommunication of a man from Santal society formal outcasting is necessary, and the act can only be performed by order of the people in council assembled. Outcasting is resorted to for breaches of either the endogamous or the exogamous law of the people, *i.e.*, for sexual intercourse with an non-Santal or with a relative whom Santal law has placed in the prohibitory table of kindred and affinity. If any one commits such an offence, the chief of the village in question calls his neighbouring colleagues together and informs them. If the charge is believed to be true, they warn the people of their respective villages not to eat or drink with the offenders and not to enter into marriage relations with them. The villagers cannot proceed further, and nothing more is done till the annual national hunt takes place in the hot weather. Here the matter is brought forward; if the people hold that the case is not proved, those who started the rumour are very severely punished. If it is proved, the people's assembly gives an order for outcasting, and they proceed to carry it out the day after the hunt. The *pargana* of the district and some other influential man are generally commissioned to superintend the operations, which are as follows.

In the early morning the males meet with flutes, drums, bows and arrows a short way beyond the end of the village street where the man lives. The young men compose extempore obscene songs in which he is mentioned by name and his sin satirically dilated on, while drumming is kept up so loudly that the din is heard for miles around. At a sign from the leader, the crowd with wild yells and uplifted hands, holding a bow or some other article, rush to the village drumming and blowing their flutes and singing obscene songs as they enter the street. If, however, the headman of the village meets the people at the street entrance with water in a *lotā*, the people will stop singing. When they reach the house of the offender, they take a pole, bamboo or the like, to which they have tied a short charred bit of firewood, a worn-out broom and some used-up leaf-plates, and fix it at the entrance to the courtyard. In the courtyard the people break the fireplaces, pots, etc., while the young men strip and commit nuisance in and round about

the house; one case is known in which it was upwards of two weeks before the place dried up properly. The scene is utterly revolting; so all women take good care to be outside the village when it takes place.

The persons outcasted are debarred from eating with others, and especially from getting their children married, and have to suffer a good deal, but not so much as might be expected. In addition to the offenders themselves, the parents on both sides should be outcasted; and if anyone receives the outcastes in his house, the whole household will suffer in the same way. The villagers have also to a certain extent to suffer with the outcasted ones, and therefore harass them in many ways so as to make them either run away or take steps to be taken into society again. Persons outcasted because they have had sexual intercourse with people of another race are not taken into society again, but leave the village. If relatives within the prohibited degrees have sexual intercourse, they will generally, if they fear detection, clear out before outcasting takes place and settle in a place where they are not known. This usually happens with people who have little property; most outcasted people who remain in their homes are well-to-do. Only the well-to-do can afford the luxury of being taken into society again. This is done by an act called *jām jāi* (literally eating so as to give *jāt*, *i.e.*, eating one's way back to the race). The procedure is as follows:—

The outcaste first gives up his old ways—this is a *sine qua non*—then he provides the necessary funds. When he knows he has sufficient, he tells the *mānj'hi*, who again informs the *pargana* of the district, and the latter makes it known to the *parganas* of twelve other districts, *i.e.*, virtually the whole country-side. A day is fixed for the ceremony, and the person who is to be readmitted prepares for a big feast. When everything is ready, the outcasted man goes out to the end of the village street with a twisted cloth round his neck (to show symbolically that he is willing to be led) and water in a *lotā*; he must look very miserable and downcast. The most venerable *pargana* present says to his colleagues and the village chiefs: "Come, let us comfort him; it is a pity to see him." He then leads them to the repentant sinner, who says: "Father, I have sinned grievously; I acknowledge my transgression. Have pity on me." The venerable *pargana*—formerly it was the privilege of a man of the Murmu sept—takes the *lotā* from the hands of the man, worships (*i.e.*, bows to) the sun, and says to the outcaste: "Since you have acknowledged your transgression, we do now take and carry all that for you." He then takes a little of the water and rinses his

mouth with it, and passes the *lotā* round to all the leading men, who do the same.

After this they enter the village and the courtyard of the outcaste who personally washes the feet of the leaders of the people. All then sit down in rows to eat, leaf plates being put before them; the outcaste serves them all personally, gives them rice and curry, and puts five rupees on the plate of every *pargana* and on that of the *mānjhi* of the village, and one rupee on the plate of every other *mānjhi*. After the feast the old *pargana* says: "From to-day we have taken this man into our society again; all pollution has been washed away. From to-day we shall drink a cup of water of his; we shall also smoke his tobacco pipe; we shall give him our daughters in marriage and also take his daughters for our sons; we have made everything clear and pure as percolated river water and spring water. If after to-day anyone talks about this matter or speaks evil, we shall fine him a hundred rupees and a feast for a hundred more." Thereupon they dig a small hole, in which they bury a lump of cow-dung and put a stone on top, thereby symbolizing that the matter is buried for ever. Thus the man becomes a Santāl again.

**VILLAGES.** The Santāl village consists, as a rule, of a long straggling street with houses on either side. A village has also very frequently some *tolās* or hamlets, which are practically small separate villages, but all are under one *mānjhi*, though the *pārānik* will live in his separate *tolā*. The dwelling-houses are built in several ways. The old way is to bring nine poles and fix them in the ground, three at either side of the site selected and three in the middle to support the roof. The roof is made with rafters of *sāl* wood, over which bamboo saplings, climbers, etc., are tied, the whole being thatched with jungle-grass. Then the walls are made by fixing thin poles of any suitable material in the ground, tying them with cross saplings, finishing the whole off with a plaster of clay and cow-dung, and glossing it over with white earth. The roof of this kind of house is two-sided; another kind of roof is four-sided, in which case there are only two central poles. The sept and sub-sept to which a man belongs determine whether one or other of these two kinds of roof is used for the dwelling-houses that have a *bhitār*. If there is no *bhitār*, any roof will do. Now-a-days the walls are frequently made of mud dried in the sun, and well-to-do Santāls often build houses of a better kind, like those they see built by prosperous members of other races.

Inside every dwelling-house a Santāl partitions off with a low wall a small compartment in one corner; this is the so-called *bhitār*

the place where the ancestors are worshipped and also the *orak bonga*. Only certain persons outside the family are permitted to enter this place, and never any women other than those belonging to the house. In front of the house the eaves of the roof are generally elongated so as to form a kind of verandah. Well-to-do people, as a rule, have in front a partially walled-in verandah, which sometimes runs round the two sides. The floor of the house is always more or less raised above the ground, the space being filled up with earth firmly beaten down. Every house has one door, generally low but with a comparatively broad opening. The door itself is made, like the walls, of wattle and daub, and is tied with loops to the door-post on which it swings. It is seldom that a lock is used; generally the door is shut with a wooden bar. If the inmates go away for some time, they affix a thorn branch to the door. More modern houses have door-frames with wooden doors and padlocks.

The verandah is a receptacle for all kinds of miscellaneous articles. Here too the Santals generally keep their *dhenki* (rice-husker) and their hand mill (*jānte*)—at least till they have some other house to set them up in. Inside the house itself they keep their paddy and other cereals, packed either in straw bundles (called *bandi*) or in gourds or earthenware pots, as well as their clothes and valuables. Generally the fireplace (made of earth, with one or more openings) is also here. Except when it is cold or raining, they do not live much inside the house; it is not pleasant, being filled with smoke and dark, as it has no window, but only one or two tiny smoke-holes. When it is cold, however, they seem to enjoy being smoked. The food is preferably prepared and also eaten inside, to ensure safety from the evil eye and other dangers. It is customary, especially in the modern mud-walled houses, to have a kind of narrow platform running round the sides and back of the house, which serves to strengthen the foundation. People may sit on this ledge; otherwise, one part of it is used for putting water-pots on. The latter are always kept outside, either here, or on a special structure (formerly always of wood) put up somewhere in the courtyard.

As soon as convenient and necessary, a Santal will build one or more other houses round a square courtyard, which all the houses face, the only exception being the pig-sty, which is situated at the side or back of the houses and often has its door to the village street. A Santal door never opens direct on the village street though it may face it, but then there is the courtyard between the house and the street. The second house erected is usually a cow-shed, built in the same way as a dwelling-house, but

frequently without solid walls. On the third side may come a house, with or without a *lhitâr*, which is used for general purposes, as a kitchen, a married son's quarters, etc. On the fourth side there may be a second cowshed or goatshed, or a dwelling-house. Finally, a kind of wall may be put up joining the several houses, with an entrance from the street and an exit towards the fields, but this is considered advanced civilization. The courtyard is kept clean by smearing it with cow-dung. In the middle a pigeon-shed is frequently erected. It should be remarked that a Santal often changes his dwelling-house site. If members of the family suffer much from fever or die from some infectious disease, it often happens that he gives up his old house altogether and builds a new one in some other place in the village, or moves away to some other village.

*Mānjhi-  
thān and  
jāherthān*

In the main street is the *mānjhitān*, which consists of a small mud mound, with a thatched roof over it, which is supported by five posts, one in the centre and four at each corner. Occasionally the *mānjhitān* is built with mud walls; and in some villages there is only a small mud mound with a central post. The latter seems to be indispensable. At the foot of the central post is a stone or roughly carved piece of wood, which is sacred to the spirits of former *mānjhis*, more especially the spirit of the first *mānjhi*, although the Santals' ideas on the subject seem to make it possible to infer that it is the spirit of the *mānjhiship* in general. Frequently a second stone or head is seen beside the principal one; this is said to represent the wife of the old *mānjhi*, and some say the one is for Pilchū Harām, (probably the original *mānjhi*), the other for Mānjhi Harām. From the roof is suspended an earthen pot containing water for the spirits to drink. Here sacrifices are offered by the villagers, and here, as already mentioned, the elders meet to discuss village affairs and settle disputes.

On the outskirts of the village is the *jāher* or sacred grove. It should consist of trees belonging to the primeval forest, and a cluster of trees is always permitted to stand round it; but only five trees are essential, viz., four *sāl* trees and one *mahuā* tree. Three of the *sāl* trees must stand in one row; at the foot of each tree is one stone for each of the following gods:—Jālererā (the lady of the grove), Moreko and Marang Buru. A fourth *sāl* tree standing anywhere near has a stone for the Pargana Bonga, and at the foot of a *mahuā* tree is a stone for the Gosainera. The stones are said to be put in their places at the command of the gods themselves, who speak by the mouths of persons who are possessed by them for the purpose. This is done at the foundation

of a village, or when, as may happen though very seldom, the villagers for some reason give up the old and establish a new *jaher*. The gods of the *jaher* are national deities worshipped by all Santals; and the sacrifices are performed by the village *nake*.

The Santal's tradition about the creation of the world and the origin of mankind is as follows. In the beginning there was only water, and below the water earth. Thākur Jiu created certain animals and fishes and then decided to create man. He made a pair of earth, but when he was going to give them souls the Day-horse came and kicked them to pieces. Thereupon Thākur decided first to make birds, and made the goose and the gander. He took them in his hands, and they looked most beautiful. So he breathed on them, and they became living beings and flew up into the air, but as they could nowhere find a resting place they came back and settled on Thākur's hand. Then the Day-horse came down along a gossamer thread to drink water; whilst he was doing this, some froth fell down from his mouth. It became foam, and the goose and the gander went along, using it as a boat. Then they implored Thākur to give them food, and he called successively on several animals (the alligator, the prawn, the *boār* fish and the crab) to bring up earth; but none of them succeeded, for the earth melted. Finally he called for the earthworm, who promised to do what was wanted if only the tortoise would stand on the water. This having been agreed to, the worm placed one end of his body on the back of the tortoise, and putting his mouth down started eating earth, which came out at the other end and settled on the back of the tortoise. Thākur harrowed this deposit, and from the earth thus coagulated mountains were formed. The foam above mentioned fastened itself to the earth, and in it Thākur sowed the seed of *sirom* (*Andropogon muricatus*) and other kinds of seeds.

The two birds made their nest in the *sirom*, and the goose laid two eggs, on which she sat whilst the gander brought her food. In the end a pair of human beings were hatched. Thākur now ordered the goose and gander to soak a piece of cotton, which he gave them, in their own food and press it out in the mouths of the children. In this way they were reared. When they grew big the birds did not know where to put them. Thākur ordered them to find a place; whereupon they found Hihiri-pipiri towards the west and took them there. There they grew up eating the seeds of the *suntu tukuch* (*Eleusine ægyptica*, Pers.) and *sāmā* (*Panicum colonum*, L.). They were naked, but not ashamed and lived in great happiness. One day Litā came to them, announced himself

as their grandfather, and expressed his pleasure at finding them so happy. Still there was one great joy which they had not experienced; so he taught them to ferment liquor and to brew rice-beer. When all was ready, Litā said they should make a libation to Marang Buru and then drink. They did so, drank, became intoxicated and had intercourse with one another. The following morning Litā came and called out to them; but now their eyes were opened, they saw that they were naked and would not come out. Later on they made shirts of fig (*Ficus indica*) leaves to cover their nakedness.

The conception of the Creator (Thākur Jiu) in the mind of the modern Santāl appears to be that of a kind of bird. Thākur is undoubtedly the same word as *thakkura* found in very late Sanskrit, and the Santāls have probably borrowed the name from the Aryans. It is a custom of theirs to avoid, as much as possible, mentioning anybody's proper name, and they may have used this one to cover an older, now forgotten, name. A curious addition to the name of the Creator is Jiu, which means spirit. Litā is, according to the traditions, the real name of Marang Buru, and is preserved in the word *litā-ak*, meaning the rainbow.

The Santāls account for the division of mankind into different communities by a story that all men were brothers until Marang Buru created dissension among them. He arranged a race in which different representatives of mankind competed for the prizes he offered. The first prize was a large supply of cooked beef, the others were neither so large nor so good, and the last consisted of a little rice and milk. The strongest and swiftest runners carried off the beef and were the ancestors of the Santāls; the hindmost, who got only the rice and milk, were Brāhmans. This division of mankind into different races took place in Sasan-bedā. The traditions, if we are to judge from the expressions used, mix up the division of the human race into nations and of the ancestors of the Santāls into septs.

**RELIGION.** The basis of the Santāl religion is the belief that there are a number of *bongās* or evil spirits to whom the ills of human life are due, and that they must be appeased by blood offerings. Thākur, the supreme being and creator, however, is considered good. He gives rain and crops, etc., and is supposed to be well pleased with the Santāls as a general rule; it is only in times of famine that they are afraid that he is angry. But because he is good, it is not necessary to propitiate him. The Santāls all acknowledge that in the old days they had no *bongas* but worshipped Thākur alone,

and picked up their belief in *bongas* during their wanderings. They now frequently confuse the sun (Chando) with Thākur, but, says an old *guru*: "Thākur is different; he cannot be seen by mortal eye, but himself sees everything. He has created every being and everything; he sustains everything, and he feeds us all. It is he who brings us here, and he also takes us away. At the will of a *bonga* or man we are not born, neither do we depart. Thākur has given us a certain span of life; so long as that lasts, nobody can take us away. According to our lives here, either good or bad, such will be our lot at his command when we go to the other world." Although, however, Thākur is now often confused with the sun, it is admitted that he is not a *bonga*, as Chando the sun-god is. Thākur is still invoked by the Santāls on certain occasions, especially in their most solemn oaths, which are administered at the annual hunt, when the people have not been able to decide who is the rightful owner of any animal. Two arrows belonging to the contending parties are stuck in the ground by the *dihri*, who invokes Thākur, saying: "Bābā Thākur of heaven, by thy grace we passed judgment, but these two were not satisfied. Thou fillest the whole heaven, Oh Thākur Father! As the judgement did not stand, we the people are without guilt. Now thou knowest the case of these two; do thou pronounce judgement!" The *dihri* then orders the two men to bow to the Day-god and each take up each his arrow, saying—"We are not responsible. Now each of you take up his arrow. Do not fear us, but fear Thākur." The words *Chando bongu samanre* are used in the law courts as an oath, but it is doubtful if it is a genuine Santāl oath, which generally has some symbolic action connected with it.

All the *bongas* except Chando Bonga are considered evil and have to be appeased with sacrifices of any of the following animals—fowls, sheep, goats or buffaloes—the selection depending on the particular sept and *bonga*. The sacrificial animal must be an uncastrated male or a virgin female, which has not had young or laid eggs, and the crucial part of the sacrifice is the giving of blood (*i.e.*, life). Those evil spirits which are common to all the Santāls—their national gods—are supposed to reside in the *jaherihān* or sacred grove, where their shrines consist merely of stones at the foot of *sāl* trees. Here they are propitiated by the men of the village, the sacrifices being performed by the village priest called *naeke* and by his assistant the *kudām naeke*. The former officiates at all the festivals, while the duty of the latter is to appease the *pargana bongas* and boundary *bongas* by scratching his arms till



they bleed, mixing the blood with rice and placing it in spots haunted by the demons

The Santāls have a vague idea of life in a future world, called Hānāpuri, in which they locate both a heaven and a hell, the name meaning literally "that world," as opposed to Noāpuri or "this world." Their ideas about their state in the future world are rather confused, but apparently they believe that in heaven the good Santāl will live at his ease for ever, enjoying the tillage of his land, hunting, eating and drinking. Their conceptions about hell, and the punishments inflicted there, are curious. Whatever has been a man's besetting sin in this world, he will be eager to commit in the next, but without being able to gratify his desire. Those who have been addicted to stealing meat will have to walk about all day with some rotten meat on their heads; they inhale the horrid smell, but cannot eat. Those who die without paying their debts will be called upon to pay them there; as they have nothing to pay with, they will have their backs flayed and salt rubbed into the sore. Their hell is sometimes also called *ich-kund*, which means literally "excrement heap," or *narak kund*, i.e., a place where wicked people have to live deep in night-soil. The spirits grind the bones of the dead, from which the bodies of children are formed. Men, however, can escape this task if they say they are preparing tobacco for chewing, and women if they are nursing babies. The entry of the spirits of the dead into the spirit world is facilitated and their comfort secured, if a man's left arm has marks burnt on it between the elbow and the wrist, and in the case of a female if her arms and chest are tattooed. It is said that if they have no *sika* (brand mark), a caterpillar as big as a log of wood will be plunged into their bosom in the other world. The *sika* is a national emblem with the Santāls, and the story sounds as if it had been invented to encourage the youngsters to stand the pain of getting the *sika*.

The head of the Santāl pantheon is Marang Buru. *Buru* means a mountain; but as every mountain is supposed to be the residence of some spirit, the word has come to be applied to a spirit. Thus, Marang Buru means great mountain, but, is used as a *nomen appellativum* for the spirit of it: his real name, according to tradition, is Litā. The Santāls have a curious legend about him, somewhat like the account of the fall of the angels. They say that formerly all the *bongas* were the *godets* of God, i.e., his messengers. One day some of them said: "We are doing all the work; we want to have the power also." They tried to

fight God, with the result that they were driven away from Thakur. They then came and settled down on all the hills and other places on earth. Their leader was Marang Buru; and now they are evil spirits, the enemies of God and man, held in great fear but also in contempt.

Other popular deities are Moreko Turuiko (literally the five-six), who is worshipped as one deity but is addressed in the plural, Jaherera the goddess of the sacred grove, Gosainera, Pargana Bonga, who have power over witches, and Mānghi Bonga, *i.e.*, the spirits of dead *mān'his*. All are malignant and destructive spirits with ill-defined attributes; all are worshipped in public in the sacred grove or near some water; and in all cases there is no worship without sacrifice. Marang Buru is also worshipped privately in the family and Mānghi Bonga at the *mān'ghihān*. Here the village priest smears red paint on the block of wood or stone in its centre and makes a libation of the home-brewed beer called *hāndi*. A fowl and a goat are beheaded, and their flesh is eaten by the villagers. There are also boundary gods called Sima Bonga, which are propitiated twice a year at times of sowing and reaping, when sacrifices of fowls are offered at the village boundary. Another interesting sacrifice is that called *Jom-sim*, which, according to tradition, was originally a sacrifice only to the sun; but in course of time the Santāls got separate Jom-sim Bongas; so now at the *Jom-sim* the sun (Sing Bonga) receives the sacrifice of a goat, and the special Jom-sim Bonga that of a goat or a ram. The *Jom-sim* is performed with many quaint ceremonies, which differ somewhat for the different septs. It is in certain respects the most important sacrifice the Santāls have, and probably the oldest, for it has more aboriginal features in it than any other sacrifice of theirs. The *Kutām-dangrā* (literally the felled bullock) regularly comes after the *Jom-sim*, but may also be performed separately after a vow. One ox is sacrificed (by felling) to the ancestors, one ox is sacrificed to the household god, and one to Marang Buru (both by beheading).

Each family also has two special gods of its own—the Orak Bonga or household god and the Abge Bonga or secret god. The names of these gods are kept secret by the Santāl till just before his death, when he whispers them to his eldest son. The object of this secrecy is to avoid incurring the jealousy of the other spirits by letting them know which spirit is preferred by the family. Men are particularly careful to keep this secret from women, for fear that one of them should get hold of the Abge Bongas, who are supposed to protect their houses against

sickness, danger and witches. The idea is that she would seduce the *bonga*, he would do her will, and there would be no possibility of escape from the calamities which would inevitably ensue.

When sacrifices are offered to the Orak Bongas, the whole family partakes of the offerings, but only men may touch food that has been laid before the Abge Bongas. These sacrifices take place once a year, but there is no fixed date, each man performing them when it suits his convenience. The Abge sacrifice is performed outside the village, only male relatives being present. What is left of the sacrifice is burnt on the spot.

*Mak-More* is an occasional sacrifice performed as the result of a vow made at a time of great distress, *e.g.*, during epidemics. When it is performed goats and fowls are sacrificed to all the national *bongas* in the *jaher*. After the sacrifice the animals are eaten by the men alone, the only exception being the wife of the *nake* who gets a share. The sacrifice is followed by dancing and singing.

The religion of the Santals is essentially a man's religion. Women are not allowed to be present at sacrifices except when they are offered in the house to the ancestors and family gods, and then only if there are no men to help the sacrificer. When a sacrifice takes place in the holy grove they may not eat the flesh of the offering, the men burning what they do not eat. This prohibition does not apply in the case of animals sacrificed to the ancestors and family gods, except that women may not eat the flesh of an animal sacrificed to Marang Buru or the head of any animal: the latter is cooked with rice and eaten by the men. On the other hand, when the sacrifice is offered in the holy grove, only the village priest can eat the head. No woman is permitted to climb the consecrated trees in the holy grove, and no woman belonging to another household—in most cases not even a daughter of the house, if she is or has been married—is allowed to enter the *bhuar*, a small closet inside the house partitioned off by a low wall, where the family gods and ancestors are supposed to reside, and where offerings are made to them and to Marang Buru. If any one breaks either of these rules, sacrifices must be offered to appease the offended *bongas*, who otherwise will revenge themselves by sending sickness and death on their worshippers.\*

Human sacrifices used to be offered to Buru-Bonga, and Sir Herbert Risley states in the *Tribes and Castes of Bengal* that actual instances had been mentioned to him of "people being kidnapped

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\*P. O. Bodding, *Taboo Customs amongst the Santals*, J.A.S.B., Part III, 1898.

and sacrificed within quite recent times by influential headmen of communes or villages who hoped in this way to gain great riches or to win some specially coveted private revenge." One authentic case of human sacrifice, which took place in 1871, may be mentioned. A Santal, called Limbu Mānjhi, having suffered for a long time from a painful illness without finding a remedy, decoyed a stranger, who was staying in his house, to a lonely hillock, and there, with the assistance of three others, offered him as a human sacrifice to relieve his own disease. The victim was first gagged and bound with his own cloth, and a small quantity of hair shaved from his head with a razor, which Limbu had brought with him. Then a Paharia, who was one of the party, commenced a *pūjā*, with *ghu*, *arwā* rice and *sindur*, while the three Santāls tied a rope of twisted creeper or *chob* round the victim's neck, and fastened it to a branch of a tree. When the *pūjā* was over Limbu unfastened the gag, saying that it was not proper for the man to die with a cloth over his face. The other two Santāls then seized the victim's legs, and held him up, while Limbu struck off his head with two blows of a sword.

The Santāl has an inveterate dread of the evil eye and of WITCH-  
CRAFT. witches who are supposed to have intercourse with the *bongas* and to have power to kill people by eating their entrails, to cause illness, blights, murrain, etc. On this subject Mr. Bodding writes:—"A most interesting book might be written on the witches, their supposed origin, their doings, etc., and how the Santāls try to guard themselves against them, although their own traditions maintain that the witches always blind the witch-finders, so that they will never be able to tell the right woman. I believe it is a mistake to pay no attention to this belief of the Santāls. It is not nonsense pure and simple, when every Santāl fears witches. They have some reason for their belief. It is a fact that there are witches among the Santals, viz., women who meet in secret in the dead of night at certain fixed places, generally on the Sunday night nearest to a new moon, who have their peculiar secret songs and *mantras*, who perform sacrifices, and who also try to kill people by magic very much in the same way as the old witches of Europe tried to. Sometimes they do it by drawing a picture of the person to be killed and then doing the killing in *effigie*; sometimes they bury *bongas* in places, expecting them to do what is wanted; often they bury a tuft of hair with *sindur*, etc.

"It is, of course, out of the question that they can do anything by magic, although they themselves may believe so; but they can do a great deal by suggestion and by keeping people in fear; and I

have no doubt that they know some vegetable poisons which they administer themselves or by proxy. It is significant that in one of their *mantras* they mention *Kambru guru*, who is the old *guru* of the medicine men (*ojhās*). That witches are found, I believe, may to some extent be accounted for by the peculiarity of the Santal religion as essentially a man's religion. The women are not permitted to approach any deity themselves; it has all to be done through the men. The two sexes have not much confidence in each other; on the contrary, the male and female sections of the community live their lives rather separate from one another, the one not having the courage or the inclination to trust the other. Now the women want, just as much as the men, to have an opportunity—for good or for evil—for direct appeal to the supernatural. It cannot be done in public or with the consent of the men; hence it must be done in secret, if it is to be done at all. I cannot say for certain, but I am inclined to think that we have here an explanation of much witchcraft. It is a secret practice of religion, but like most secret things it is liable to develop into bad practices."

The Santals call a witch a *dan*, a word which, though Hindi, has come from Sanskrit. They have several methods of witch-finding, and go to work in a very deliberate manner. If a person is ill and does not get well in a couple of days, an *ojhā* is called in. He proceeds to divine with the help of oil and two *sāl* leaves, marking the different parts of the leaf, one "house" (place) in it meaning a *bonga*, etc., and one a witch. Then oil is applied, and, muttering a *mantra*, the *ojhā* rubs the leaves together. If the oil and dirt show up in the "house" of witches, the villagers act upon the knowledge thus imparted. In the evening all the people, with the *mānghi* at their head, walk through the street, calling out that such and such a person is ill, and if he does not recover they will not call "her" (*i.e.*, the witch) good. If after this the sick person does not recover, *i.e.*, if the witch does not obey, the headman sends pairs of men to the different *ojhās* in the vicinity to verify the divination. If three *ojhās* confirm it, its truth is considered certain; if not, they go on till they get enough divinations to support the first verdict. No one has really any doubt of its truth; it is merely desired to secure a kind of moral support.

The next step is to locate the witch. This is done by the people fixing fresh branches in the ground and then observing which branch first withers. In order to be fair to the witches, another test is made. A large number of branches are put in the ground, first one as a witness on the part of the sun-god (Sing

Bonga), one for the Orak Bonga of the sick person, one for the *bonga* of the wife's father, one for the male relatives, etc., one for disease, and one for each house in the village. The branches are smeared with *sindur*; Sing Bonga is invoked, and after some hours they come back to see which branches have withered. To make quite sure, the test is repeated at other places outside the village boundary. The same object is also attained by putting a leaf with rice in a white-ant hill and observing which is first touched by the ants.

The sick man is now asked whether he wants the investigation to go on. If so, they go to the *Jān* (i.e. the man who knows), who is supposed to be able to tell the name of the witch by revelation. The Santals imagine that they test the ability of the *Jān*, and they act upon his declaration when he names anybody. "As a matter of fact," writes Mr. Bodding, "all *Jāns* are unmitigated scoundrels, who through spies get all necessary information respecting the sick and the suspected, so as to be able to denounce any one they like. They are responsible for much misery and many crimes. A witch may be beaten to death; formerly she was certain of being driven away from her home in a horribly degrading way." Various attempts have been made to stop such murders, one curious device being employed by a former Assistant Commissioner. Whenever he heard that women had been denounced, he brought out a galvanic battery. The girl was told to hold the handles, but the electric current was disconnected. Her accusers were next told to do the same, and, the current being turned on, received a good shock, remaining prisoners until they acknowledged that they had made a mistake. The Santals still cling to their belief in witches, and not a year passes without some poor woman being convicted and killed for the mysterious mischief she is supposed to have done. •

The custom of taboo is common among the Santals. Names TABOO. are tabooed in the cases of (1) a man and his younger brother's wife, (2) a man and his wife's younger brother's wife, (3) a woman and her younger sister's husband, and (4) a woman and her younger brother's wife. Husband and wife are also prohibited from mentioning each other's names, not only when they are speaking of or to each other but also if they are speaking of another person bearing the same name. This custom is strictly observed, and in the case of brothers and sisters-in-law a breach of it is considered a sin which will be punished both in this world and the next. The Santals also taboo the totems which have given names to their septs and sub-septs. For instance, the

Mal Saren may not utter the word *mal* when engaged in a religious ceremony or when sitting on a *panchayat* to determine any tribal questions. The Jihu-Saren may not kill or eat the *jihu* or babbler bird, nor may they wear a particular sort of necklace known as *jihu mālā* from the resemblance which it bears to the babbler's eggs. The *jihu* is said to have guided the ancestor of the sept to water when he was dying of thirst in the forest. The Sankh-Saren may not wear shell necklaces or ornaments, and are forbidden to eat, carry, cut or use shells. The custom of taboo also prevents women joining in religious ceremonies.

SYMPA-  
THETIC  
MAGIC.

There is a curious practice of sympathetic magic in connection with the annual national hunt of the Santals, which is presided over by a master of the hunt called the *dihri*. The *dihri* is responsible for the hunt, *i.e.*, that all goes well and no calamity happens. He himself seeks by divination to find out who are threatened by any danger during its continuance, and advises them to turn back; but they generally make him sacrifice fowls for them to Sing Bonga to avert the calamity. He further performs sacrifices to the *bongas* of the forest where the hunt is held, to ensure success and safety. The wife of the *dihri* is also held responsible. She must remain at home absolutely quiet, doing nothing and harbouring only pure thoughts; and she has to remain in this state till she knows that the men have had success or something has happened. She looks into a cup of water; if she sees this turn to blood, she knows that blood has flown, *i.e.*, an animal has been killed, and she is released. Otherwise she must wait till she can calculate that they have reached the place of meeting. In the same way the *dihri* must not touch any food till an animal has been shot or wounded. If there is any disaster, the people will accuse the *dihri* of being responsible, and the latter will accuse his wife, holding that she must have misbehaved in some way.

FESTI-  
VALS.

*Sohrāe*.

In the Santāl villages there is a succession of festivals throughout the year, nearly all connected with agricultural operations. The chief of these is the *Sohrāe* or harvest festival, celebrated in Pus (December-January) after the rice crop of the year has been harvested. It used to be celebrated in the month of Asin, for formerly they had gathered their principal crop by that time. The Santāls, indeed, still call Asin the month of *Sohrāe*—a name probably corrupted from Dasaharā. When the day has been fixed, all houses prepare beer (*hāndi*) and invite their relatives, especially daughters, sisters, etc. The night before the festival

\* The Revd. P. O. Bodding, *Taboo Customs amongst the Santāls*, J. A. S. B. Part III, 1898; *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 228.

commences, the *naeke* is religiously abstinent—for before any sacrifice the sacrificer must not have relations with a woman and sleeps on the ground on a mat. As soon as it is day, the *godet* goes round and collects sacrificial fowls from every house. In the middle of the forenoon the *naeke* goes somewhere near water, together with some of the village people, the *godet* taking the fowls with him. The *naeke* bathes and then sacrifices the fowls to the different *bongas*, after which the men of the village cook the fowls with rice and eat them; they also drink *hāndi*. The *mānjhi* then harangues the people, telling them that they must not touch forbidden fruit. They answer:—"We stop our ears with twelve bulls of cotton, and we will not pay heed to any matter, be it great or small." In other words, they agree to throw off all moral restraint for the five days of the festival.

After this they call the cowboys with the cattle and make the latter tread out sacrificial magic circles. The cow which treads on and breaks an egg placed here, or simply smells at it, is caught; they wash her feet, anoint her horns with oil, and also smear *sindur* on them; for the owner of the cow will have good luck. The cowherd is lifted up and put down before the *mānjhi*, whom he salutes, and after him all old men. The following days are days of continued revelry wherein all participate; old people drink, young people drink, dance and are generally immoral, the idea being that all shall be glad.

On the first night the young people go from cowshed to cowshed, singing and drumming to "bless" the cattle. The next day all the men go with their plough-yokes, battle-axes and knives to bathe, and in every house they sacrifice pigs and fowls to Marang Buru, the household gods and their ancestors. The third day they set up poles in the village street, and having tied the cattle to them tease and excite the animals and make them furious. Friends come and go visiting one another, all more or less drunk and wild with excitement. After all is over, the young people drink and eat in the house of the *jog-mānjhi*. This beer-drinking readmits them into caste, licentiousness ceases, and the closed bars of the people are opened. They go through the village street beating a branch to drive *dardaha* (the glutton) away; for from this time onwards the people must cease to eat according to their heart's desire, and hard life recommences.

For the five days and nights during which the festival lasts the Santals indulge in a veritable saturnalia, giving themselves up to dancing, eating, drinking, singing and sexual license. This license, however, does not extend to adultery, nor does it sanction



intercourse between persons of the same sept; but if the latter offence is committed, it is punished less severely than at other times. Formerly the *Sohræ* was held at different dates in each village, with the result that debauchery and drunkenness were indulged in for weeks at a time, but this has now been stopped by an order that the festival must be held at the same time in each village. This order is not always observed, for if a person dies, or a child is born in the village, *Sohræ* must be postponed till the village is purified.

*Sakrât.*

Close upon *Sohræ* comes *Sakrât*, which is held on the last day in the month of Pus. The previous day they catch fish, and on the day of *Sakrât* itself the men go out hunting while the women make parched rice and cakes which the men offer to the ancestors. In the afternoon the *jog-mânjhi* collects the men to shoot at a target, after which they dance a war dance and have various kinds of amusements. The day ends with drinking and dancing.

*Bahâ.*

Next in importance to the *Sohræ* is the *Bahâ Parab*, which is held in Phālgun (February-March). The *Bahâ* (literally flower) festival celebrates the fact that the new year is well commenced. It is characterized by frolic and gladness, drinking, dancing and eating; but it is not such a time of revelry as the *Sohræ*. During it fowls are sacrificed in the *jaher* to all the national deities. On the first day of the festival the young people of the village build two sheds in the *jaher*, one for Jahererâ, Moreko and Marang Buru, and the other for Gosainera; and the *thâns* are cleansed by a plastering of cow-dung. Then they go to bathe, and oil several articles (winnowing-fan, basket, bow and arrow, battle-axe, broom, a wristlet, a necklace, a bell and a horn) which are to be used next day, when three persons become "possessed" by the three first *bongas* mentioned above. The whole night is spent in drumming at the house of the *naeke*, where all assemble with the three *bongas*—for the persons possessed are addressed as *bongas*. Jahererâ—the goddess is a female, but a man is possessed—takes the ornaments, the basket and the broom; Moreko takes the bow and arrow and Marang Buru carries the battle-axe. With these articles they start running for the *jaher* followed by the boys. On arriving at the *jaher*, Jahererâ sweeps the *thâns*; the *naeke* asks the *bongas*, i.e., those personating the gods, for the things they have brought, and places them on a mat. He next proceeds to ask them questions, a proceeding which probably was originally an attempt to find out something about the coming year. The *naeke* then washes the *bongas* and throws the surplus water over them, whereupon the

*bongas* jump up howling. After this *Jaherera* commences washing, and finally they return to the village.

Next day they start again, as on the first day, for the *jaher*, the *bongas* carrying the same things. When they see a fine *sal* tree in bloom, *Moreko* shoots an arrow into it, while *Marang Buru* climbs it and cuts down the flowering branches, *Jaherera* receiving the flowers in a basket. On the road *Marang Buru* gathers *mahuā* blossoms. In the *jaher* the *bongas* are again placed on a mat under the shed, and the *naeke*, sitting in front of them, sacrifices the fowls, and places a bunch of flowers and a *mahuā* blossom before each *bonga*. The *bongas* suck the blood of the fowls, whereupon the *naeke* washes their feet, *Jaherera* doing the same to the *naeke*. The *naeke*, together with his wife, who is now brought to the *jaher* for the purpose, eats one of the fowls cooked with rice; some of the villagers eat the rest in the *jaher*. After this all leave, except the *naeke*, who remains alone in the *jaher*. The villagers then proceed to sacrifice fowls and pigs in their own houses, and to eat and drink. In the afternoon they go to the *jaher* to bring the *naeke* back in state, and the rest of the day is spent in general merry-making. During this festival the women enjoy themselves to their heart's content, drenching one another with water from the jars they carry.

*Erok-sim* is the sowing festival celebrated in *Asārḥ* (June- *Erok-sim*. July). *Erok-sim*, *Sohrāe* and *Bahā* are the only festivals at which the whole village perform sacrifices publicly as well as in their houses. At the other festivals the *naeke* alone sacrifices on behalf of the village.

The *Jātrā Parab* is a festival borrowed from the *Bhuiyās* by the Santāls, which is performed here and there but is not properly a Santāl village festival. It is held in January or February and is marked by the sacrifice of a pigeon and a goat. While these are being offered the *chatyas*, or oracles of the god, three or five in number, sit close by and work themselves into a prophetic frenzy. Any Santāl who consults them can learn the future or the causes of ill fortune, such as his own illness, the death of his cattle, etc. This festival is also the occasion of a fair, at which there is a merry-go-round, similar to that used by the Nepalese. It consists of a strong circular framework, suspended between two high posts, in which seats are placed and made to revolve.

At the *Patā* festival, which is held in the rains in honour of *Patā* and *Patā Bonga*, the same sacrifices are offered as at the *Jātrā Parab*. *Chalā*. It is really a Hindu festival in honour of *Mahādeo* (*Siva*),

much frequented by Santāls. The *Chatā Parab* (a corrupt form of the Hindu *Charak Pūjā*) is observed on some day in Baisākh. Formerly the Santāls used to be suspended from a high revolving pole by hooks inserted in their back and swung round and round. The swinging apparatus still exists, but if anybody swings he is suspended by ropes not by hooks. Both the festivals are times of revelry, during which the young people, Santāls and Hindus, spend one night in gross immorality.

Other  
festivals.

Other festivals are as follows:—*Harīar-sim*, the feast of the sprouting of the rice is held in Sān, *i.e.*, Srāban (July-August). *Irgundli-nawāi*, *i.e.*, the offering of the first fruits of the millets called *iri* (*Panicum miliaceum*) and *gundli* (*Panicum frumentaceum*), is held in Bhādra (August-September). *Janthar Pūjā* is held in Aghan (November-December) to celebrate the first fruits of the winter rice crop. A pig or a ram is sacrificed in the *Pargana thān* of the *jaher* by the *kudām naeke*: the animal is eaten by the men alone. The *naeke* and the villagers offer at this time the first fruits of the paddy.

*Māgh-sim* is held in the month of Māgh (January-February) when the jungle grass is cut: fowls are sacrificed to all *bongas* by the *naeke*, but not in the *jaher*. This last festival marks the end of the Santāl year. Servants are paid their wages, and fresh engagements are entered into. All the village officials, the *mānjhi*, *pārānk*, *jog-mānjhi*, *godet*, *naeke* and *kudām naeke* go through the form of resigning their appointments, and the cultivators give notice of giving up their lands. After ten days or so the *mānjhi* calls the villagers together and says he has changed his mind and will stay on as *mānjhi* if they will have him. His offer is accompanied with free drinks of rice beer, and is carried by acclamation. One by one the other officials do the same; the ryots follow suit and, after much beer has been consumed, the affairs of the village go on as they did before.

BIRTH  
AND BIRTH  
CEREMO-  
NIES.

When a child is born the umbilical cord is cut with an arrow, and the placenta buried in the floor inside the house. The house and village become religiously unclean. No sacrifice, and consequently no festival, can be held in the village, and no one can go and eat in the house where the birth has taken place till they are purified by the *janam chhatiār* ceremony. The procedure is as follows. All the males of the village are shaved in the house of birth, first the *naeke*, then the *kudām naeke*, then the *mānjhi* and other officials, and, last of all, the father of the child. Then the child is brought out by the midwife, who has two small leaf cups, one filled with water and the other empty. The head

of the child having been shaved, the midwife puts the hair in the empty cup and ties two threads to the arrow with which the umbilical cord was cut. Then the men, led by the father, go to bathe at the place whence water is fetched: when they return the midwife takes the women to the same place, carrying with her oil and turmeric, the arrow and the hair. The midwife throws the hair with one of the two threads into the water after having made five *sindur* marks at the spot. This is called "buying the watering place." When they have finished they return, the midwife last of all, bringing back with her the other thread and the arrow. This second thread is soaked in turmeric and then tied round the waist of the child. After this the mother sits under the eaves of the house with the child in her lap and also some leaves of the *ataak* tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*).

The midwife then kneads some cow-dung with water on the eaves of the house, lets some of the mixture drip down on the mother, smears a little on her own head and also sucks a little of the same stuff. The mother now puts her child on a *chārpāi* inside the house, and the midwife proceeds to mix flour with water in three leaf cups. The contents of one she sprinkles on the legs of the *chārpāi*; the contents of a second she sprinkles on the breast of the *naeke*, *kudām naeke*, *mānjhi* and other officials, and thereafter on the breasts of all the men of the village. The last cup is for the women, who are sprinkled in the same order, first the *naeke's* wife, then the *kudām naeke's* wife and so on.

The father and mother having decided (inside the house) what name is to be given to the child, the midwife comes out, salutes all those present and announces the name, saying: "From to-day call him at the hunt by this name;" or, in the case of a girl, "Come, so-and-so, if you are going to fetch water." Then they bring out rice soup cooked with *nīm* leaves, giving it to the *naeke*, the *kudām naeke* and so on, according to the table of *chhatiār* precedence, and, after the men have been served, to the women. After five days the child is shaved again. This ceremony of *janam chhatiār* is regarded as giving the child a place amongst human beings. The important part which the women play in it may be noted: they are the real actors.

*Janam chhatiār* is, as a rule, celebrated in the case of a male child five days and in case of a girl three days after birth. It may be postponed, but is always celebrated on uneven days (*e.g.*, the seventh) after the birth. If, however, the child is born within three days before a new moon, it receives its name earlier, and even on the day of birth, the belief being that to give a child its

name in another month than that in which it was born will bring misfortune of some kind upon it, especially when he or she is married. The eldest son takes the name of his paternal grandfather; a second son that of his maternal grandfather; a third son that of the paternal grandfather's brother; the fourth son that of the maternal grandfather's brother, etc. A similar custom is observed in the case of girls, the names of relations on the female side being taken in the same order. This custom is rigorously observed, there being only two exceptions. If the father is a *ghardi jawāe* (*vide infra*), the name of the maternal grandfather or grandmother is given first; and if a woman takes medicine to get children—a rather frequent practice—the child receives the name of the man who gave the medicine or of his wife.

There is a curious practice of giving a child two names, viz., its real (*mūl*) name, and a second (*bahnā*) name, by which it is always known. This practice is especially observed when the child is named after a relative whose name it would be improper for some members of the family to mention. If the namesake has had two names, the child generally gets both; if there is something peculiar or abnormal about him, he is very soon known by a name denoting this peculiarity. The Santāls are reluctant to mention the real name of any person, fearing it may bring about something untoward. Many persons, however, have only one name.

*Chacho  
chhatiār.*

To enable anybody to take his place in Santāl society and participate in its rights, rules, ceremonies, etc., they have another ceremony called *chacho chhatiār* (*chacho* meaning to toddle or walk). Without having been through this no one can be married and no one can be cremated, but has to be buried. There is no age fixed for this ceremony; only it must precede marriage. If a man has several children he tries to have it at one and the same time for all of them. The procedure is as follows:—The father brews *hāndi* and provides oil and turmeric for the villagers. When the *hāndi* is ready he calls the *mānjhi* and *pārānik* in the morning and gives them a drink. They ask him what *hāndi* it is, and, after drinking, the headman bids the *godet* call the villagers together. When they have come, the girls of the village anoint the *naeke* and his wife, who sit on a mat, with oil and turmeric; next the *kudām naeke* and his wife, then the *mānjhi* and his wife and all the officials in the same order as at the *janam chhatiār*; last of all, all the women are anointed. The *hāndi* is now served in leaf cups to the *mānjhi* and *pārānik* and then to the other people; after which all are ready for further proceedings. They ask how many children the *hāndi*

is for, and for each child four small leaf cups are given to all those present. Then they ask the father: "How many *iri* (*Panicum crus-galli*) and how many *ebra* (*Setaria Italica*) ears have ripened for you?" This is a figurative expression for "How many boys and girls have you?" On receiving an answer they ask again: "Where is the land?" The father tells them where the namesakes of the children live, whereupon they call for "namesake *hāndi*," i.e., beer which the namesakes present have brought with them. The people then sing a special song and dance and drink.

A *guru*, who in a way officiates for the father of the family, now starts the *binti*, i.e., a mythical historical recitation. He begins with the creation of the earth and relates the Santal history of mankind, their wanderings, etc., according to tradition, and recounts how their ancestors spread abroad, some of them coming to Sikhar, where the first *parganu* was Hikim, who said to the people: "Let us settle here; we have found primeval forest and virgin soil." The ancestors said: "Let us help him; we will burn and clear jungle, we will live and prosper." Then they came to their present abode and married, cleared jungle and multiplied. Thereupon the *guru* on behalf of the family enters into a colloquy with the people, in which *inter alia* he says—"We implore you to let us be with you to brew and drink beer, to fetch water, to pin leaves together on the day of marriage, the day of *chhatiār*, the day of cremation. We were like crows, we are become white like paddy birds. You, villagers, be our witnesses." This ends the formal part of the proceedings.

The festival is concluded by further drinking and singing of *chhatiār* and other songs. It will be seen that there is no special or formal act done by the village people. They are invited for the occasion; the father (or his representative) implores the community to recognize the young ones as participants at the three great social occasions, and the people acknowledge this by drinking *hāndi*, the Santāl mode of ratification. There is no kind of sacrifice at either *janam* or *chacho chhatiār*.

Adult marriages are the rule among the Santāls, a young man generally marrying between the age of 18 and 22, i.e., as soon as he can afford it after he has grown up. Until their insurrection in 1855 the Santāls did not marry before about 25 years of age, but now it very seldom happens that marriage is left till so late. Child-marriage is very rare, and is an innovation borrowed from the Hindus.

MAR-  
RIAGE.

Sexual intercourse before marriage is tolerated, except between members of the same sept; in such cases the guilty parties are outcasted. It is, however, rare for illegitimate children to be born, for if a girl becomes pregnant, the young man is bound to marry her or get her a husband, who acts as the child's father and gives it his sept. The regular Santal name for all kinds of marriage is *baplā*, a word which very probably meant originally mutual strengthening, i.e., of the two families. There are two essential features of the marriage ceremony. The first is *sindurdān*, i.e., the smearing of vermilion on the bride's forehead and the parting of her hair. The bride is seated in a basket held up by her relations and the bridegroom, who applies the *sindur* and rides on the shoulders of one of his relations. The second is a meal in which the husband and wife eat together, for by so doing she passes to her husband's family. When the girl is unmarried, the binding ceremony is in all cases the *sindurdān*; but there is a difference in the methods in which *sindurdān* is reached. The following is a brief account of the latter.

*Kiring-  
bahu.*

The most common form is that called *kiring-bahu*, i.e., a bought daughter-in-law. The marriage is negotiated through a marriage-broker (*rāel ār*), even if the parents on both sides arrange everything, as is sometimes the case when they are friends and desire the match. Anyone may be a marriage-broker, but an elderly man or woman is most often employed. The *rāebār* finds out where an eligible girl is, and arranges a day for the young man's friends to come and see the girl's house. On the way they look out very eagerly for good or bad omens, and will turn back if anything of ill omen occurs. On arriving at the girl's village the go-between gets hold of the *jog-mānjhi* and says to him that they have come to look at a vessel, and asks him to show them it. The girl is then produced walking between two other girls. If the bridegroom's friends are satisfied, they are sometimes invited to the girl's house for food and drink. Some time afterwards the girl's friends go in the same way to see the prospective bridegroom. Formerly it was not the custom to let the two see one another before marriage; now-a-days they are permitted a distant view of one another at a market-place or the like. When mutually satisfied the friends commence visiting and feasting one another, but not in a casual way, for every step is taken according to custom. The girl's friends come to see the house and door of the young man, i.e., to ascertain his worldly means. Then follows betrothal; the bridegroom's friends go to the other

party and are feasted; the future father-in-law takes the girl and seats her on his thigh, and in this position puts a solid brass necklet on her and kisses her on her mouth. Henceforward the parents commence to salute each other in the manner appropriate to their new relationship, and also to use the plural in addressing one another. Afterwards a feast of the same kind is held in the young man's house.

Then comes the payment of the bride-price. For this a day is fixed, the date being remembered by knots on a string, one of which is untied every day. After many ceremonies at the bridegroom's house they proceed in state to the bride's house, where the bride-price is paid and there is feasting and drinking. Two rupees of the price are handed over to the *joq-māñhi*, who gives them to the bride's father. This is called "track covering," and is one of the few features which may point to the original Santal marriage being forcible abduction. The marriage takes place sometimes in the same year, sometimes the next or even later, and is performed with an astonishing amount of ceremonial and many quaint usages. The bride-price, which is paid by the bridegroom, is usually Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 or even Rs. 7. If more than Rs. 3 is paid, something is paid back in kind worth much more than the extra amount. The rule is that if Rs. 5 are paid a cow, a brass cup and clothes are given for the bridegroom, a goat for the bridegroom's friends and some rice; if Rs. 7, a cow with a calf, a brass cup, a brass plate and the other things above mentioned.

*Ghardi-jawāe* is the name given to the custom of obtaining *Ghardi*. a bride by service, just as Jacob served for Rachel. The bride-*jawāe*. groom pays nothing for his bride, but lives with his father-in-law and works for him without wages for five years. He then gets two buffaloes, some rice and some agricultural implements, and sets up house for himself and his wife. This form of marriage is usual when a girl is deformed, ugly or unattractive, and also if a man has only daughters or grown-up daughters and infant sons. Only a poor Santal will consent to becoming a bridegroom in this way.

*Kiring-jawāe*, meaning a bought husband, is a form of marriage *Kiring* recognized when a girl has had an intrigue with or becomes *jawāe*. pregnant by a man who cannot marry her because they both belong to the same sept. The rule is that, as he cannot marry her, he is bound to buy her a husband, whose consent is secured by giving him enough to make it worth his while. As a rule the name of the guilty man is kept secret, and the girl's father pays the bridegroom the money required, which he frequently gets



from her lover. Rupees 20 are paid to the man willing to marry the girl, stand sponsor for the child, i.e., cause *janam chhatiār* to be performed, and obtain for it admission to his sub-sept. Formerly the custom was to pay one pair of plough bullocks, a cow with a calf and one *bandi* of paddy (about 10 to 12 maunds).

*Itut.*

There are two forms of marriage for young people who settle matters for themselves without intermediaries, viz., *itut* and *nir-bolok*. *Itut* means paint-smearing and is so called because the young man, when he gets an opportunity, smears some red paint or mud—anything will do—on the forehead of the girl with whom he is in love and thus claims her as his wife. Having done this, he runs away to avoid the thrashing he may expect at the hands of her relations, if he is caught on the spot. The girl's people go to the young man's house, smash all the earthenware pots they find in or about the house, and break the fireplace. If they find the boy they tie him up, beat him till he is half dead and lay him on his back in the courtyard. Then they kill two goats with a *kāpi* or shoot with bow and arrow two pigs belonging to the offender. Next they go to the cattle shed and take away as bail about three pairs of the best bullocks or buffaloes they can find. After this they go to the *mān̄ji* and sit in judgment on the case. Besides the two buffaloes or bullocks, they bring a goat belonging to the girl's family, and both parties eat the three animals together. The girl's father gets Rs. 16, and the headman of the young man's village Rs. 5 for "saving the boy's life." Cases have been known of boys being killed on such occasions, and such cases have not been taken up, the popular opinion being that the boy has got his deserts.

*Itut* is resorted to when the girl's parents are not agreeable to the match and the young people want to force their approval. In such cases the latter arrange matters beforehand, and as a rule their plans succeed; when all is settled, they are remarried in a regular way. In some cases, however, a young man will resort to *itut* when he has some doubts about being able to gain the girl he wants in the regular way. It also sometimes happens that a youth will do so simply to revenge himself on a girl, having no intention to keep her as his wife, but merely to have her divorced and stigmatised as divorced, for if the girl declines to live with him she must be divorced in full form and cannot again be married as a spinster. On the whole *itut* is rare.

*Nir-bolok.*

*Nir-bolok* (literally meaning "run in") is a form of marriage used when a girl takes the initiative and is of two kinds. The

first takes place when a young man and a girl living in the same village have agreed to marry, but the former hesitates about the match. In this case, the girl goes to the *jag-mānjhi* and reveals the secret to him, and he takes her to the house of the boy's parents. Two days afterwards the parents inform the *mānjhi*, and they talk the matter over, temporarily separate the young couple, and end by having a regular marriage. The other kind of *nir-bolok* is resorted to when a young man, after living with a girl, refuses to marry her; then the girl forcibly enters his house and sits in a corner, whilst the future mother-in-law tries to drive her out by burning tobacco leaves. If the young man agrees to keep the girl, a marriage is arranged in the manner mentioned above; otherwise the villagers fine both, and he must give the girl Rs 3.

There is another form of marriage called *tunki dipil baplā* *Tunki  
dipil  
baplā.* (literally "carrying a basket-on-the-head-marriage"), which is the poor man's marriage. The girl is simply brought without any ceremony to the bridegroom's house, where *sindurdān* is performed.

The form called *sanga* is used for the marriage of widows and divorced women. *Sanga.* The bride is brought to the bridegroom's house attended by a small party of her own friends, and the binding portion of the ritual consists in the bridegroom taking a *dimbu* flower, marking it with *sindur* with his left hand, and with the same hand sticking it in the bride's back hair.

Widows are allowed to marry again, but the bride-price is only half that given for an unmarried girl. The reason for this is that the Santāls believe that after death a widow will rejoin her first husband, and her second husband will only enjoy her in this life. Bigamy is not uncommon, nor is it regarded as irregular, but few Santāls can afford more than one wife.

Fraternal polyandry is a recognized custom among the Santāls. POLYAN-  
DRY. There is sexual intercourse between a husband's younger brothers and his wife (*hili*), provided they show a certain amount of decency and do not make too open a display of their relations. According to the Revd. L. O. Skreferud, the younger brothers formerly enjoyed this privilege even after they were married, but at present the wife is usually common property only while they are unmarried. When an elder brother dies, his widow very frequently makes her home with one of the younger brothers as a kind of elder wife, and this almost invariably happens when the widow is left badly off. Similarly, a Santāl woman's younger sisters (*eruel kuriko*) have a share of her

husband's favours. It is, in fact, considered perfectly legitimate for a man to carry on an intrigue with his wife's younger sister, provided the girl is agreeable, the only condition being that if she becomes pregnant he must make her his wife. Such intimacy is not resented by his wife. On the contrary, she countenances and sometimes encourages it, though Santāl wives are usually extremely jealous. If taxed about it, she will often reply that it prevents her younger sister from having liaisons with other young men. It must not be supposed that such relations are universal. "All elder brothers do not submit tamely to their wives being enjoyed in common; all wives are not complacent, nor do all younger brothers and younger sisters conform to what is asked of them. Families often become divided in consequence of an indulgence in these practices, but the fact that they are recognized and form a part of the social system of the Santāl is incontestable."\*

The elder brother has by no means the same privileges as younger brothers, a familiar saying being — "The younger brother's wife (*bokot bahu*) is like a *bonga* or god." From the day of her marriage, a younger brother's wife and his elder brother (*dadat*) must never so much as touch one another; they cannot enter the same room or remain together in the courtyard unless others are present. Should she come in from work in the fields, and find the elder brother sitting alone in the courtyard, she must remain in the village street, or in another verandah of the house till some other people enter the house. She may not loosen or comb her hair before the elder brother; to do so would be considered highly improper, and would imply that the relations between them had become much too familiar. She cannot usually sit down in his presence, and it is most improper for her to take a seat on a *parkom* or bed while he is close by. Should it be necessary for her to sit down while he is near, she must use a *gando* or low stool.\*

The following explanation by Mr. Boddington of the relations of brothers and their wives is of interest as illustrating the Santāl family life:—"The first thing to be taken into consideration is the basis of the Santāl matrimony, viz., the husband's rights of property. A Santāl buys his wife, or father the father buys wives for his sons, if he is living; and that this is real business is shown by many circumstances, besides the fact that a bride-price is paid, of which I shall mention only one. When at the marriage the bride has been brought to her future home

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\* *Notes on fraternal polyandry among the Santāls*, by Mr. C. H. Craven and the Revd. L. O. Skrefsrud, J.A.S.B. Part III, 1908, pp. 88-90.

and her friends and relations are going to take leave, the *lunti budhi*\* says to her :—"Now remain, my girl; this is your house, this is the place where you shall go out and in. Eat and work industriously. Don't long for us; this is your house (or home) for life. Both bones and ashes did we sell you." The meaning of the last expression is that whether alive or dead she will thenceforth belong to and be the property of her husband.

"When she becomes the property of her husband, his younger brothers, because they stand in a quasi-filial relation to him, seem also to get some rights in her together with him. A result of this is probably the circumstance mentioned above that the younger brothers are allowed such liberties with the wife of the elder one, and another custom, that in case the elder brother dies, the younger brother—if he wishes, for it is not enforced—takes the widow as his wife (or co-wife, if he has one before), without, however, going through any marriage ceremonies. They have already paid for her, they say; she belongs to the family.

"Further, an elder brother, especially the eldest one, is looked upon as the representative of the father, and after his death is the head and governor of the family. For this reason there are, in fact, some Santals who look on the wife of their eldest brother as equal to their mother and pay her respect accordingly. But it must be borne in mind that this is only individualistic and not the general custom. I mention it only to show the feelings of the better Santals towards their elder brother, especially when there is some considerable difference in age between them. In case the father is dead, an elder brother manages the affairs of the household, and will have to buy the wife for his younger brother. The result of this position of an elder brother is that he is considered legally equal to a father-in-law of the wife of his younger brother."

The old *gurus* say that in the good old days only two causes DIVORCE. brought about divorce, viz., unfaithfulness on the part of the wife and witchcraft. Now-a-days it is otherwise; if the married couple do not live peaceably, divorce is soon resorted to, and even a woman may demand divorce if the man takes another wife. If a woman is proved, to the satisfaction of the Santal sense of justice, to be a witch, the proceedings are very simple. Without any ceremonies the husband, supported by the people of his village, takes the woman and makes her over to her parents or nearest male relatives, himself keeping all the children. The

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\* The *lunti budhi* is the duenna who follows the bride to the house of the bridegroom, and is generally a relation of the bride's father, but other people may officiate as such.

bride-price is not paid back, and if there is a daughter the mother does not get the customary piece of cloth at the daughter's marriage. This kind of divorce is now nearly obsolete. The regular divorce (called *sakam aruch*, i.e., literally, leaf tearing) is performed in the following way:—The villagers meet together, led by the *mānjhi*s of the two villages concerned. A *lotā* with water is placed on the ground, and husband and wife are made to stand facing one another, one on each side of the *lotā*, the man facing the east. The headman of the husband's village then exhorts the man as follows:—"By the grace of Sing Bonga, the five mountain spirits and the ancestors, we, the people, took omens from the *urich* bird on the right side and the *ere* bird on the left, and tied you together and joined you together with marriage chains like the *tar* and the *bando* climbers (two large and strong forest vines). We did not join you together for one day, but for ever and aye, like stone and rock, till you became hoary and moss-grown. Now it is no fault of ours, but if you cannot be united, what can we the people do? Now, therefore, both of you think well and reflect carefully in your hearts; otherwise you may at some future day say that the people made you separate. You, if you really want to renounce her, call on Sing Bonga, the five mountain spirits and the ancestors, and tear the leaves, or else tear them not."

The man is then made to stand on his left leg, facing the sun and with his hands in a suppliant posture. Thereupon they give him three *sāl* (*Shorea robusta*) leaves. He takes them and, with his cloth twisted round his neck, salutes Sing Bonga and tears the leaves with a jerk. Then he turns round and kicks the *lotā* over with his right foot, and renounces any further connection with the woman. The man salutes all those present, commencing with the *mānjhi*; the woman does the same. If the leaves are not torn straight, there is an idea that the pair will come together again. If all the water in the *lotā* is not spilt, the idea is the same; it is thought that there is probably still some love left. In any case, in spite of their being divorced in this world, they will meet again in the world to come.

The act just described is the final one. Before it is performed, they go through more or less protracted judicial proceedings with full settlement of the claims of the parties, the laws regulating which are briefly as follows. If a man divorces his wife for no fault of hers, he has to pay her divorce damages (*chhadaadi*)—now-a-days generally Rs. 5—besides which, he cannot claim to have the bride-price refunded. He has further to give the woman one cow, one *bandi* of paddy (about 12 maunds, valued at Rs. 5

according to the old price of paddy), one brass cup and one cloth. All this is now generally commuted to money and amounts to Rs. 7. The children belong to and go with the father, but if there is a babe at the breast, the mother keeps it till it can go to the father, when the woman, in return for her trouble in feeding and looking after it, gets 16 maunds of paddy and one cloth. If the mother has had special expenses caused by the child's illness, they are refunded to her.

If the woman is at fault, the man gets the bride-price repaid, and the woman gets nothing. If she has committed adultery, the co-respondent will have to pay double the bride-price and keep the woman, who is generally given into the man's custody by the *panchayat*. If the man consents to keep his wife, he gets from the co respondent Rs 5 "to cleanse the vessel," and Rs 5 "to save the head, i.e., life." Formerly the husband tracked the guilty pair down and killed them both.

If a man has taken a second wife, the first and real wife can demand divorce. Formerly a second wife was taken, with the consent of the first wife, only when the latter was barren or so feeble as not to be able to do her household work. The man in this case does not get any of the bride-price back, but has, on the contrary, to give his divorced wife something. Formerly he gave her a cow, a *bandi* of paddy, a cloth and a brass cup, and this custom is still kept up if the pair have after their marriage managed to acquire some property; otherwise the gift merely consists of Rs. 5 as damages, a cloth and a brass cup, the total value of which is about Rs. 7. At the time of divorce the people on both sides go very carefully into all the accounts, and the sum paid may in some cases be small or apparently very large.

The Santals, like other tribes in the same state of development, look upon marriage as naturally necessary. The people always try to get their children married as soon as they can afford it, so as to get them settled in life. Practically the only unmarried people are those physically unfit for marriage—and it is no easy matter for them to be certified unfit. The young people are not permitted to make one another's acquaintance before marriage if they do not happen to know each other already. Love is not an essential thing in a Santal marriage, and has nothing to do with the arrangement of a regular marriage. As a matter of fact, marriage is practically a leap into the dark, and it is a wonder that it turns out as well as it often does. It may, however, happen that the affections of one or other are already engaged, or become engaged later on, in a

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